11/25/81 R4105-4 1 A

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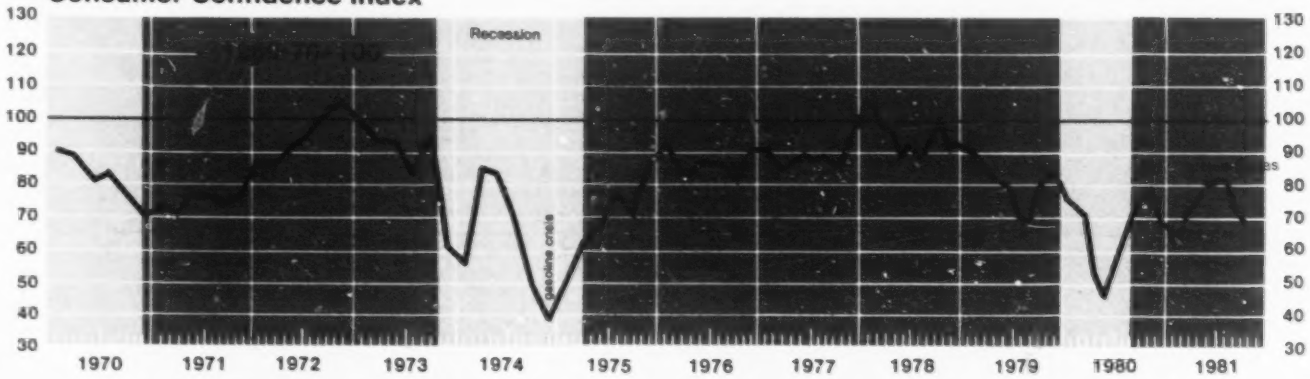
Consumer Attitudes and Buying Plans

A Monthly Report from The Conference Board

Based on a Survey Conducted by National Family Opinion, Inc.

November, 1981

Consumer Confidence Index



CONFIDENCE AND BUYING PLANS CONTINUE TO DECLINE

The level of consumer confidence declined again in October. The Board's Index (1969-1970 = 100) fell to 68.5 for a loss of close to four points. Actually this is a rather modest decrease compared to the preceding month, when the series was off by more than twice that magnitude.

Consumers are increasingly uneasy with the ongoing situation. More persons than last time say business conditions are bad, and there has also been an increase in concern about jobs. On both of these issues pessimists outnumber optimists by a disconcertingly large margin.

In looking ahead to likely trends over the next six months, consumers are also increasingly more apprehensive. During the Summer months their view of the immediate future was quite positive, but recently there has been a marked change in opinion. In the last survey, respondents who believed that conditions would improve in the months ahead only slightly outnumbered those who feared they would worsen. But during the Summer months optimists had outnumbered pessimists on this issue by more than two to one.

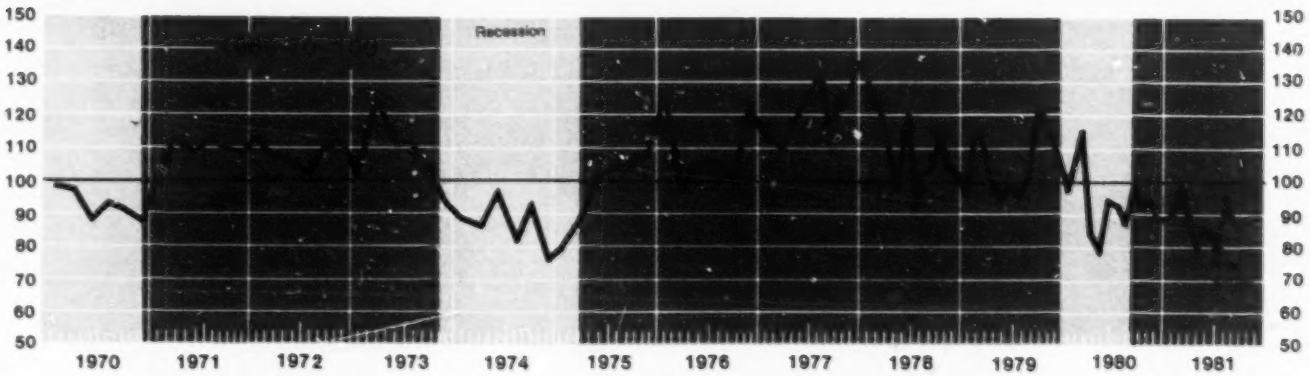
On the question of employment, more persons than last time now fear that jobs will grow sparser in the months ahead. In assessing their own finances there has been a rise in both the number who expect their earnings to rise, and in those who fear they will decline.

Buying plans are also down and for the second consecutive months. Some 6.6% of all those contacted indicated that they plan to purchase an automobile in the months ahead, down from 7% last time. Interest in homes was expressed by 2.3% of those surveyed: While the fraction is the same as last time, the level of buying intent is exceptionally low. Plans to buy a major appliance have edged off only moderately from the preceding probe, but this series, too, is running at a depressed level.

The proportion of persons planning to take a vacation over the next months registered a good gain over August, when this question was last included in the survey. Intentions to visit a foreign country are running stronger than last time, as are plans to fly.

Fabian Linden

Buying Plans Index



All data seasonally adjusted

Consumer Expectations and Intentions

Based on surveys conducted by National Family Opinion, Inc.
Percentage of all households

								New Series				
	1980			1981								
All series seasonally adjusted	*Oct.*	*Nov.*	*Dec.*	*Jan.*	*Feb.*	*Mar.*	*Apr.*	*May*	*June*	*July*	*Aug.*	*Sept.(r)*	*Oct.(p)*
						Composite Series: Index Numbers, 1969-1970 = 100							
Consumer Confidence Index	76.7	79.9	68.0	67.7	61.1	70.9	75.5	80.6	80.4	80.6	81.6	72.3	68.5
Present Situation	47.6	49.5	46.1	45.4	42.8	49.1	52.3	59.6	56.1	57.6	58.3	53.1	49.8
Expectations	96.1	100.1	82.7	82.5	73.3	85.4	91.1	94.7	96.6	95.9	97.2	85.1	81.1
Buying Plans Index	91.8	94.2	89.2	89.9	91.9	98.7	96.8	84.0	87.4	77.0	96.3	89.0	84.6
						Appraisal of Present Situation: Percent							
Business Conditions													
Good	15.8	16.0	15.6	14.5	14.3	15.8	15.3	19.3	17.9	19.5	19.2	17.0	17.4
Bad	30.7	30.1	31.6	33.5	34.8	31.2	29.2	25.4	26.5	25.1	24.8	27.8	31.1
Normal	53.5	53.9	52.8	52.0	50.9	53.0	55.5	55.3	55.6	55.4	56.0	55.2	51.5
Employment													
Jobs plentiful	11.5	11.7	11.0	11.8	11.2	12.3	13.7	14.1	13.4	12.2	13.0	12.9	12.1
Jobs not so plentiful	49.0	50.9	49.2	49.4	47.6	49.4	49.4	48.7	49.1	51.1	49.5	48.3	47.8
Jobs hard to get	39.5	37.4	39.8	38.8	41.2	38.3	36.9	37.2	37.5	36.7	37.5	38.8	40.1
						Expectations for Six Months Hence: Percent							
Business Conditions													
Better	22.4	24.9	19.7	19.6	17.7	20.8	21.1	21.3	24.1	23.5	23.0	19.7	19.8
Worse	13.6	11.3	16.9	17.5	20.8	15.2	12.3	10.5	11.7	11.1	11.1	14.8	18.3
Same	64.0	63.8	63.4	62.9	61.5	64.0	66.6	68.2	64.2	65.4	65.9	65.5	61.9
Employment													
More jobs	19.7	20.3	15.6	15.4	13.0	15.1	14.9	16.2	18.6	18.1	18.6	14.0	15.8
Fewer jobs	19.5	18.1	24.8	25.0	27.5	22.7	19.8	19.3	19.2	20.0	19.5	22.3	26.6
Same	60.8	61.6	59.6	59.6	59.5	62.2	65.3	64.5	62.2	61.9	61.9	63.7	57.6
Income													
Increase	31.9	31.9	30.5	32.0	28.3	28.5	32.6	30.4	30.8	30.7	30.8	30.6	33.3
Decrease	6.8	7.6	8.7	8.4	9.9	8.3	8.1	7.5	8.1	8.0	7.3	7.8	9.5
Same	61.3	60.5	60.8	59.6	61.8	63.2	59.3	62.1	61.1	61.3	61.9	61.6	57.2
						Plans to Buy Within Six Months: Percent							
Automobile													
Yes	6.7	7.2	6.7	7.2	7.3	7.8	5.7	6.3	5.8	6.4	7.9	7.0	6.6
New	3.7	3.8	3.3	3.5	3.6	4.1	3.2	3.0	3.2	3.3	4.2	3.1	3.6
Used	2.7	3.3	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	2.1	2.8	2.4	2.8	3.3	3.5	2.5
Uncertain	0.3	0.1	0	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.5
Home													
Yes	2.7	2.6	2.7	2.3	2.6	2.9	3.0	2.5	2.8	1.7	2.4	2.3	2.3
New	0.7	0.8	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.7	1.0	0.3	0.8	0.5	0.6	0.3	0.6
Lived in	1.3	1.1	1.4	1.1	1.5	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.4	0.8	1.3	1.4	1.1
Uncertain	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.5	0.4	0.9	0.7	0.9	0.6	0.4	0.5	0.6	0.6
Major appliances													
Total plans	25.8	27.5	25.5	26.3	24.3	26.2	26.7	24.6	27.6	25.2	29.5	27.2	26.5
Refrigerator	3.2	3.7	3.1	3.2	3.5	3.6	3.6	3.6	4.4	3.3	4.6	3.4	3.8
Washing machine	3.0	3.7	3.6	3.2	2.6	3.3	3.1	2.6	3.4	3.1	4.1	3.6	3.6
Black and white TV	1.3	1.4	1.3	1.1	0.9	1.2	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.3	1.2	1.3	1.3
Color TV	5.9	6.0	5.3	6.1	5.7	5.7	6.0	6.0	5.8	7.6	7.1	7.0	6.5
Vacuum cleaner	5.0	4.8	4.3	5.1	4.6	5.2	4.7	4.6	4.9	4.2	5.5	5.3	4.6
Range	2.4	2.5	3.1	3.1	2.6	2.6	3.2	2.2	2.4	2.0	2.7	2.4	2.4
Clothes dryer	3.0	3.1	2.9	2.9	2.4	2.6	2.9	2.2	3.2	2.2	2.9	3.0	3.0
Air conditioner	2.0	2.3	1.9	1.6	2.0	2.0	1.9	2.1	2.1	1.5	1.4	1.2	1.3
Carpet	10.9	9.6	9.5	8.0	8.5	9.5	8.2	7.6	7.5	5.8	8.9	8.5	7.0
						Vacation Intended Within Six Months: Percent							
Vacation Intended	44.7		43.9		42.7		45.6		42.6		43.1		49.9
Destination													
Home state	11.0		11.3		10.6		11.1		8.7		8.7		12.4
Other states	31.0		29.8		29.5		31.8		30.7		31.5		34.1
Foreign country	4.1		4.2		4.0		4.0		4.7		4.5		5.3
Means of Travel													
Automobile	32.9		30.9		30.1		33.3		29.2		28.8		33.2
Airplane	11.8		12.3		12.8		11.9		13.2		13.8		15.3
Other	2.8		2.6		2.5		2.8		4.1		3.3		4.2

New Series: Beginning May, 1981 the NFO sample includes all types of households, prior to that families only. To link results overlapping surveys were conducted for four months commencing with May. Data are available on request. (p)—preliminary (r)—revised

Please Note: In the interest of speeding the data contained in this publication to you, these series are now available on-line through The Conference Board Data Base. For more information, contact Linette Stein at (212) 759-0900.

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Consumer Attitudes and Buying Plans

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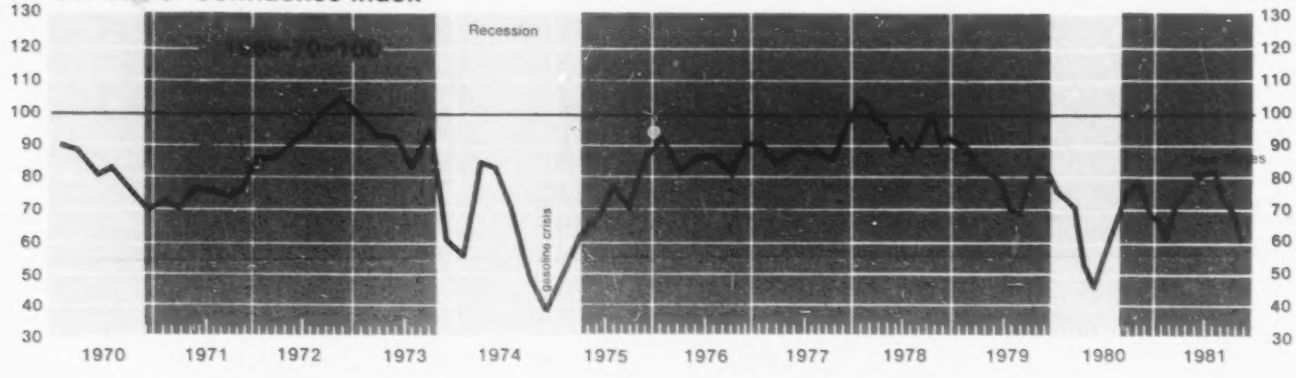
December, 1981

Consumer Confidence Index



CONSUMERS LESS OPTIMISTIC BUYING PLANS SOFT BUT STEADY

The consumer's spirits sagged again in November for the third consecutive month. The Board's Confidence Index (1969-70 = 100) currently stands at 60.5, down 7.5 points from last month. However, the cumulative decline since August comes to about 20 points, which is a fairly moderate erosion for that time interval, compared with the two preceding recessions.

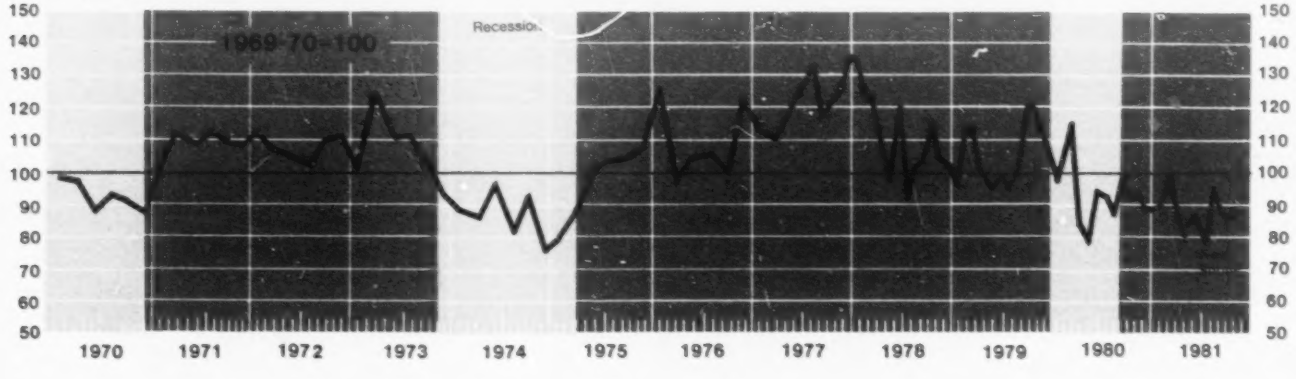
Consumers are especially concerned with employment prospects. Some 44% of all respondents—the largest number in years—report jobs are "hard to get." There is increased apprehension about future job prospects, as well as about the economy, generally. As compared with late Summer, about twice as many persons now fear business conditions will worsen over the next six months. Also, fewer persons than in the last survey anticipate that their incomes will increase in the period ahead.

Despite growing uneasiness, consumer buying plans are up—but just barely. Fractionally more persons than last time plan to purchase an automobile, also fractionally more expressed an intent to buy a home. Plans to buy major appliances remained more or less unchanged. However, intentions to buy are at a relatively low level for all the items included in the survey.

Of course, the continued erosion of consumer confidence reflects the spreading weakness in the nation's business. Nevertheless, the aggregate decline in the Board's Confidence Index over the past three months still suggests a moderate rather than a severe recession. On a number of important issues, consumers are only moderately pessimistic on balance. For instance, those who expect business conditions to improve are still twice as numerous as they were during last year's moderate economic turndown, and those fearing conditions will worsen are substantially fewer than earlier. All in all, then, while consumers are a lot less secure than some months ago, the level of pessimism is still relatively benign as compared with last year's recession.

Fabian Linden

Buying Plans Index



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Consumer Expectations and Intentions

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							New Series						
	1980		1981										
All series seasonally adjusted	*Nov.*	*Dec.*	*Jan.*	*Feb.*	*Mar.*	*Apr.*	*May*	*June*	*July*	*Aug.*	*Sept.*	*Oct.(r)*	*Nov.(p)*
						Composite Series: Index Numbers, 1969-1970 = 100							
Consumer Confidence Index	79.9	66.0	67.7	61.1	70.9	75.5	80.6	80.4	80.6	81.6	72.3	68.0	60.5
Present Situation	49.5	46.1	45.4	42.8	49.1	52.3	59.6	56.1	57.6	58.3	53.1	48.5	40.0
Expectations	100.1	82.7	82.5	73.2	85.4	91.1	94.7	96.6	95.9	97.2	85.1	81.0	74.1
Buying Plans Index	94.2	89.2	89.9	91.0	98.7	86.8	84.0	87.4	77.0	96.3	89.0	85.7	88.4
						Appraisal of Present Situation: Percent							
Business Conditions													
Good	16.0	15.6	14.5	14.3	15.8	15.3	19.3	17.9	19.5	19.2	17.0	17.0	14.0
Bad	30.1	31.6	33.5	34.8	31.2	29.2	25.4	26.5	25.1	24.8	27.8	31.2	36.2
Normal	53.9	52.8	52.0	50.9	53.0	55.5	55.3	55.6	55.4	56.0	55.2	51.8	49.8
Employment													
Jobs plentiful	11.7	11.0	11.8	11.2	12.3	13.7	14.1	13.4	12.2	13.0	12.9	11.6	10.6
Jobs not so plentiful	50.9	49.2	49.4	47.6	49.4	49.4	48.7	49.1	51.1	49.5	48.3	48.1	45.4
Jobs hard to get	37.4	39.8	38.8	41.2	38.3	36.9	37.2	37.5	36.7	37.5	38.8	40.3	44.0
						Expectations for Six Months Hence: Percent							
Business Conditions													
Better	24.9	19.7	19.6	17.7	20.8	21.1	21.3	24.1	23.5	23.0	19.7	19.7	19.2
Worse	11.3	16.9	17.5	20.8	15.2	12.3	10.5	11.7	11.1	11.1	14.8	18.1	21.4
Same	63.8	63.4	62.9	61.5	64.0	66.6	68.2	64.2	65.4	65.9	65.5	62.2	59.4
Employment													
More jobs	20.3	15.6	15.4	13.0	15.1	14.9	16.2	18.6	18.1	18.6	14.0	15.6	13.9
Fewer jobs	18.1	24.8	25.0	27.5	22.7	19.8	19.3	19.2	20.0	19.5	22.3	26.5	30.4
Same	61.6	59.6	59.6	59.5	62.2	65.3	64.5	62.2	61.9	61.9	63.7	57.9	55.7
Income													
Increase	31.9	30.5	32.0	28.3	28.5	32.6	30.4	30.8	30.7	30.8	30.6	33.9	29.4
Decrease	7.6	8.7	8.4	9.9	8.3	8.1	7.5	8.1	8.0	7.3	7.8	9.4	9.4
Same	60.5	60.8	59.6	61.8	63.2	59.3	62.1	61.1	61.3	61.9	61.6	56.7	61.2
						Plans to Buy Within Six Months: Percent							
Automobile													
Yes	7.2	6.7	7.2	7.3	7.8	5.7	6.3	5.8	6.4	7.9	7.0	6.6	6.8
New	3.8	3.3	3.5	3.6	4.1	3.2	3.0	3.2	3.3	4.2	3.1	3.5	3.7
Used	3.3	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	2.1	2.8	2.4	2.8	3.3	3.5	2.7	2.5
Uncertain	0.1	0	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.6
Home													
Yes	2.6	2.7	2.3	2.6	2.9	3.0	2.5	2.8	1.7	2.4	2.3	2.3	2.4
New	0.8	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.7	1.0	0.3	0.8	0.5	0.6	0.3	0.6	0.4
Lived in	1.1	1.4	1.1	1.5	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.4	0.8	1.3	1.4	1.1	1.2
Uncertain	0.7	0.7	0.5	0.4	0.9	0.7	0.9	0.6	0.4	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.8
Major appliances													
Total plans	27.5	25.5	26.3	24.3	26.2	26.7	24.6	27.6	25.2	29.5	27.2	27.7	26.5
Refrigerator	3.7	3.1	3.2	3.5	3.6	3.6	3.6	4.4	3.3	4.6	3.4	4.0	3.0
Washing machine	3.7	3.6	3.2	2.6	3.3	3.1	2.6	3.4	3.1	4.1	3.6	3.6	3.7
Black and white TV	1.4	1.3	1.1	0.9	1.2	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.3	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.2
Color TV	6.0	5.3	6.1	5.7	5.7	6.0	6.0	5.8	7.6	7.1	7.0	6.8	6.8
Vacuum cleaner	4.8	4.3	5.1	4.6	5.2	4.7	4.6	4.9	4.2	5.5	5.3	5.0	5.7
Range	2.5	3.1	3.1	2.6	2.6	3.2	2.2	2.4	2.0	2.7	2.4	2.4	2.2
Clothes dryer	3.1	2.9	2.9	2.4	2.6	2.9	2.2	3.2	2.2	2.9	3.0	3.1	2.8
Air conditioner	2.3	1.9	1.6	2.0	2.0	1.9	2.1	2.1	1.5	1.4	1.2	1.4	1.1
Carpet	9.6	9.5	8.0	8.5	9.5	8.2	7.6	7.5	5.8	8.9	8.5	7.1	8.4
						Vacation Intended Within Six Months: Percent							
Vacation Intended		43.9		42.7		45.6		42.6		43.1		50.3	
Destination													
Home state		11.3		10.6		11.1		8.7		8.7		12.7	
Other states		29.8		29.5		31.8		30.7		31.5		34.1	
Foreign country		4.2		4.0		4.0		4.7		4.5		5.3	
Means of Travel													
Automobile		30.9		30.1		33.3		29.2		28.8		33.7	
Airplane		12.3		12.8		11.9		13.2		13.8		15.5	
Other		2.6		2.5		2.8		4.1		3.3		3.9	

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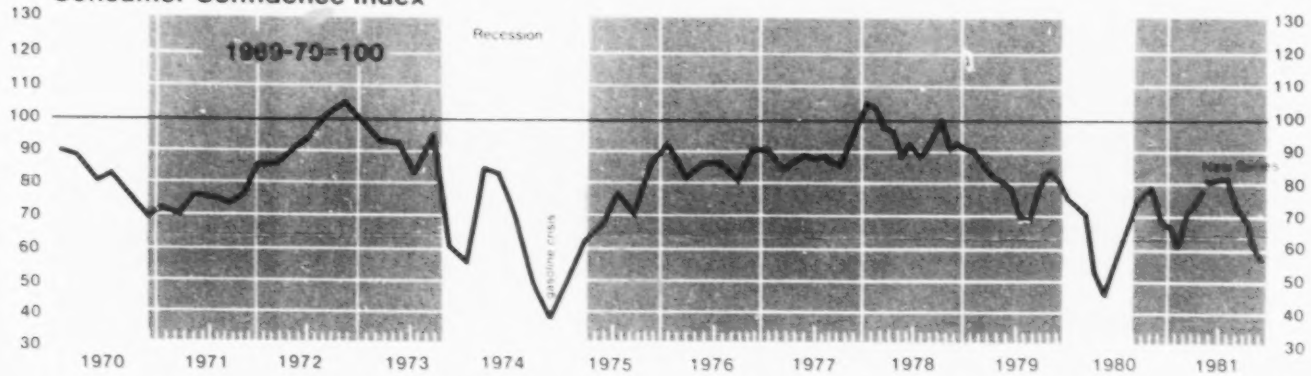


CONFIDENCE DOWN MODERATELY. BUT BUYING PLANS FIRMER

Consumer confidence declined in December for the fourth consecutive month, but the loss was relatively small. The Board's Index (1969-1970 = 100) retreated to 56.1, a loss of only about four points from the prior month. Buying plans, however, rose in both November and December.

The decline in the measure of confidence was largely accounted for by increasing consumer uneasiness with present conditions. The number of survey respondents who consider present business conditions to be "bad," and the number who report that jobs are "hard to get," both increased since last month. On both these issues, the negative vote exceeds the positive by roughly fourfold.

In looking ahead to the next six months, consumers are rather surprisingly sanguine. Compared with the the preceding probe, there was a rise in the number of those who believe business would worsen, and in those concerned about the job outlook, while the numbers who expressed positive views on both of these matters were also somewhat more numerous. In viewing their own likely fortunes, there was a rise in those who expected better things, as well as in those who were pessimistic. On balance, the expectational component of the survey did not change very much when compared to last month.

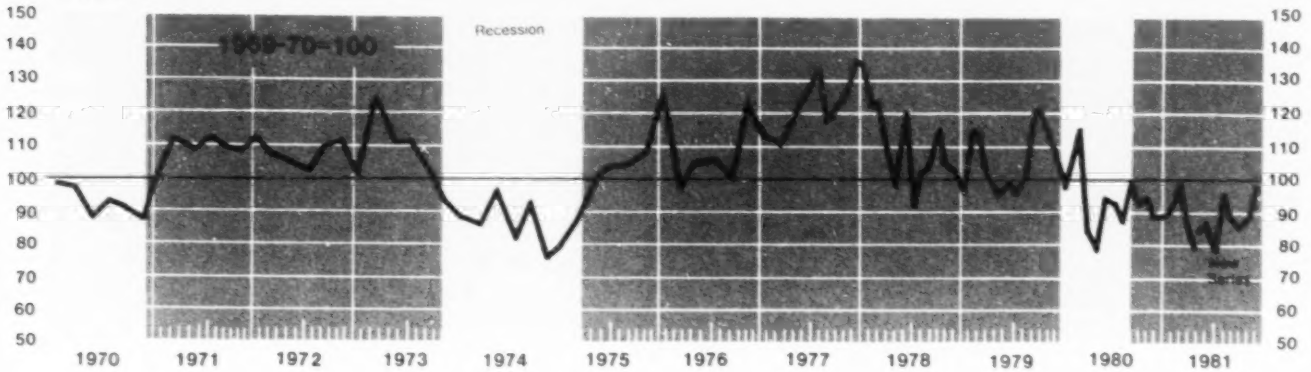
The Buying Plans Index, however, was up, but primarily because of an increased interest in appliances. The proportion of respondents who plan to make a major appliance purchase rose to 32.1%, a gain of 5 points over the prior probe.

Intentions to buy an automobile—new or used—were indicated by 7.2% of all those contacted, up from 6.9% previously. Home buying plans were expressed by 2.7% of all respondents compared to 2.5% in November.

Vacation plans edged up a bit from the fairly high level registered in October, when this question was last included in the survey.

Fabian Linden

Buying Plans Index



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Expectations	82.7	84.5	79.3	85.4	91.1	94.7	95.6	95.9	97.2	89.7	81.0	78.3	72.6
Buying Plans Index	91.2	89.9	87.9	98.7	86.6	94.1	97.9	111.7	108.3	100.1	98.7	89.9	96.1
Appraisal of Present Situation: Percent													
Business Conditions													
Good	15.6	14.5	14.3	15.8	15.3	16.3	17.9	19.5	19.2	17.0	17.0	14.0	11.9
Bad	31.6	33.5	34.8	31.2	29.2	25.1	26.5	25.1	24.8	27.8	31.2	36.0	41.5
Normal	52.8	52.0	50.9	53.0	55.5	55.3	55.6	55.4	56.0	55.2	51.8	50.0	46.6
Employment													
Jobs plentiful	11.0	11.8	11.2	12.3	13.7	14.1	13.4	12.2	13.0	12.9	11.6	10.7	8.2
Jobs not so plentiful	49.2	49.4	47.6	49.4	49.4	48.7	49.1	51.1	49.5	48.3	48.1	45.4	43.5
Jobs hard to get	39.8	38.8	41.2	38.3	36.9	37.2	37.5	36.7	37.5	38.8	40.3	43.9	48.3
Expectations for Six Months Hence: Percent													
Business Conditions													
Better	19.7	19.6	17.7	20.8	21.1	21.3	24.1	23.5	23.0	19.7	19.7	19.3	20.8
Worse	16.9	17.5	20.8	15.2	12.3	10.5	11.7	11.1	11.1	14.8	18.1	21.0	26.0
Same	63.4	62.9	61.5	64.0	66.6	68.2	64.2	65.4	65.9	65.5	62.2	59.7	53.2
Employment													
More jobs	15.6	15.4	13.0	15.1	14.9	16.2	18.6	18.1	18.6	14.0	15.6	14.0	16.5
Fewer jobs	24.8	25.0	27.5	22.7	19.8	19.3	19.2	20.0	19.5	22.3	26.5	30.4	34.0
Same	59.6	59.6	59.5	62.2	65.3	64.5	62.2	61.9	61.9	63.7	57.9	55.6	49.5
Income													
Increase	30.5	32.0	28.3	28.5	32.6	30.4	30.8	30.7	30.8	30.6	33.9	30.1	30.5
Decrease	8.7	8.4	9.9	8.3	8.1	7.5	8.1	8.0	7.3	7.8	9.4	9.6	10.7
Same	60.8	59.6	61.8	63.2	59.3	62.1	61.1	61.3	61.9	61.6	56.7	60.3	58.8
Plans to Buy Within Six Months: Percent													
Automobile													
Yes	6.7	7.2	7.3	7.8	5.7	6.3	5.8	6.4	7.9	7.0	6.6	6.9	7.2
New	3.3	3.5	3.6	4.1	3.2	3.0	3.2	3.3	4.2	3.1	3.5	3.7	3.6
Used	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	2.1	2.8	2.4	2.8	3.3	3.5	2.7	2.6	2.9
Uncertain	0	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.6	0.7
Home													
Yes	2.7	2.3	2.6	2.9	3.0	2.5	2.8	1.7	2.4	2.3	2.3	2.5	2.7
New	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.7	1.0	0.3	0.8	0.5	0.6	0.3	0.6	0.4	0.6
Lived in	1.4	1.1	1.5	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.4	0.8	1.3	1.4	1.1	1.4	1.1
Uncertain	0.7	0.5	0.4	0.9	0.7	0.9	0.6	0.4	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.7	1.0
Major appliances													
Total plans	25.5	26.3	24.3	26.2	26.7	24.6	27.6	25.2	29.5	27.2	27.7	27.4	32.1
Refrigerator	3.1	3.2	3.5	3.6	3.6	3.6	4.4	3.3	4.6	3.4	4.0	3.2	3.7
Washing machine	3.6	3.2	2.6	3.3	3.1	2.6	3.4	3.1	4.1	3.6	3.6	3.8	4.3
Black and white TV	1.3	1.1	0.9	1.2	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.3	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.2	1.3
Color TV	5.3	6.1	5.7	5.7	6.0	6.0	5.8	7.6	7.1	7.0	6.8	7.2	8.3
Vacuum cleaner	4.3	5.1	4.6	5.2	4.7	4.6	4.9	4.2	5.5	5.3	5.0	5.7	5.6
Range	3.1	3.1	2.6	2.6	3.2	2.2	2.4	2.0	2.7	2.4	2.4	2.3	2.9
Clothes dryer	2.9	2.9	2.4	2.6	2.9	2.2	3.2	2.2	2.9	3.0	3.1	2.9	3.6
Air conditioner	1.9	1.6	2.0	2.0	1.9	2.1	2.1	1.5	1.4	1.2	1.4	1.1	2.4
Carpet	9.5	8.0	8.5	9.5	8.2	7.6	7.5	5.8	8.9	8.5	7.1	8.5	9.6
Vacation Intended Within Six Months: Percent													
Vacation Intended	43.9		42.7		45.6		42.6		43.1		50.3		51.8
Destination													
Home state	11.3		10.6		11.1		8.7		8.7		12.7		11.3
Other states	29.8		29.5		31.8		30.7		31.5		34.1		35.1
Foreign country	4.2		4.0		4.0		4.7		4.5		5.3		5.1
Means of Travel													
Automobile	30.9		30.1		30.3		29.2		28.8		33.7		30.7
Airplane	12.3		12.8		11.9		13.2		13.8		15.5		17.0
Other	2.6		2.5		2.8		4.1		3.3		3.9		2.7

New Series: Beginning May, 1981 the NFO sample includes all types of households, prior to that families only. To link results overlapping surveys were conducted for four months commencing with May. Data are available on request. (p)—preliminary (r)—revised

Please Note: In the interest of speeding the data contained in this publication to you, these series are now available on-line through The Conference Board Data Base. For more information, contact Linette Stein at (212) 759-0900.

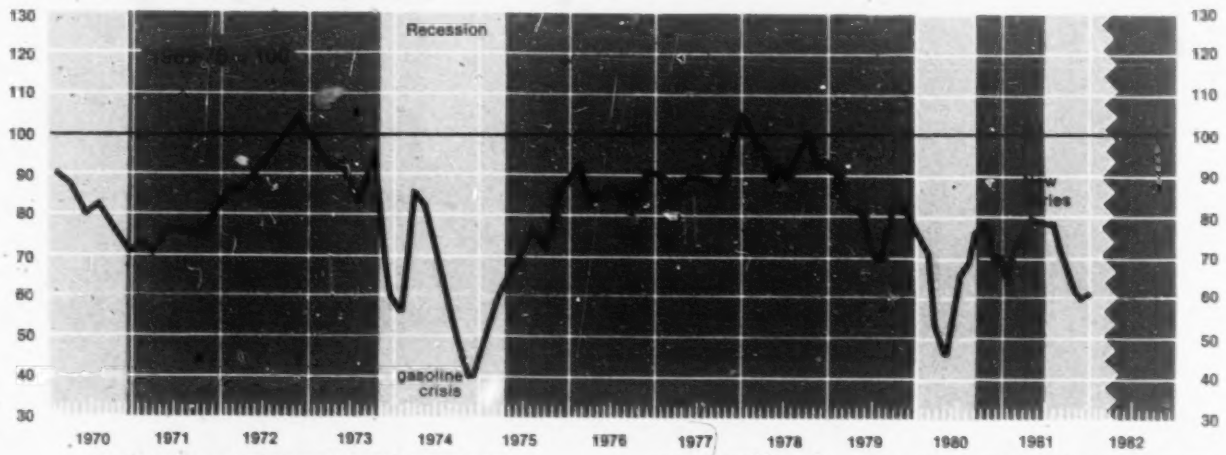
3/5/82 R4105-4 A

Consumer Attitudes and Buying Plans

A Monthly Report from The Conference Board
Based on a Survey Conducted by National Family Opinion, Inc.

Consumer Confidence Index

February, 1982



CONSUMER EXPECTATIONS IMPROVE BUT PLANS TO BUY DROP

Consumer confidence edged up in January, following eight months of consecutive decline. The latest reading of the Board's Index (1969-1970 = 100) inched up to 61.2, a gain of under two points. Most encouraging is that consumers have become more optimistic about business and employment conditions in the months ahead. An improvement in expectations generally foreshadows an upturn in economic conditions.

In assessing the present scene, more respondents indicate concern about the state of business and employment. Close to half of all those queried complained that jobs are hard to get; a mere 8% said they are "plentiful."

However, in looking ahead to the next six months, more persons anticipate that business conditions will improve; fewer expect them to worsen. Optimists now outnumber pessimists on this issue. Consumers are also more positive in their assessment of employment prospects. However, somewhat fewer persons than last time believe their incomes will rise in the months ahead.

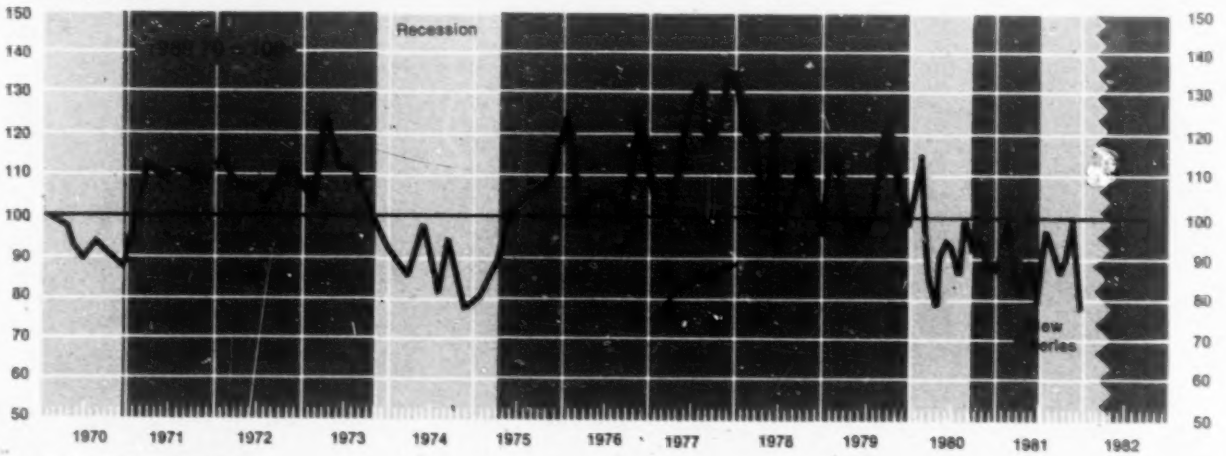
Buying plans are down for all items included in the survey. Intentions to purchase an automobile have dropped to 6%, off from 7.3% in the previous month. Plans to purchase a home are also weak. Only 2% of those contacted expressed such an intent, compared with 2.7% previously.

Interest in major appliances has also sagged substantially after a fairly sturdy gain the month before. In January, only 24.3% of those contacted indicated they would buy an appliance within six months, down from 32.7 percent.

Most important, consumers have become distinctly more optimistic about the future, which suggests that business might begin to recover by midyear, or even before.

Fabian Linden

Buying Plans Index



All data seasonally adjusted

Consumer Expectations and Intentions

Based on surveys conducted by National Family Opinion, Inc.
Percentage of all households

	New Series												
	1981												1982
All series seasonally adjusted	*Jan.*	*Feb.*	*Mar.*	*Apr.*	*May*	*June*	*July*	*Aug.*	*Sept.*	*Oct.*	*Nov.*	*Dec.*	*Jan.(p)*
					Composite Series: Index Numbers, 1969-1970 = 100								
Consumer Confidence Index	70.0	63.5	71.8	75.0	79.9	79.6	78.6	78.6	70.4	67.4	61.6	59.4	61.2
Present Situation	46.9	43.1	48.8	51.3	58.9	56.1	56.7	56.4	51.9	48.0	41.1	34.4	30.9
Expectations	85.4	77.0	87.1	90.9	93.9	95.3	93.3	93.4	82.8	80.3	75.2	76.1	81.4
Buying Plans Index	87.5	90.5	98.0	85.9	84.8	89.5	78.7	96.7	90.3	86.2	89.8	93.2	77.0
					Appraisal of Present Situation: Percent								
Business Conditions													
Good	14.9	14.4	15.9	15.4	19.4	18.0	19.2	18.4	16.5	16.7	14.2	13.0	12.0
Bad	32.4	34.3	31.1	29.5	25.7	26.6	25.7	25.9	28.7	31.7	35.2	39.5	41.1
Normal	52.7	51.3	53.0	55.1	54.9	55.4	55.1	55.7	54.8	51.6	50.6	47.5	46.9
Employment													
Jobs plentiful	11.9	11.1	12.1	13.3	13.9	13.3	12.1	13.0	13.0	11.6	10.8	8.9	8.0
Jobs not so plentiful	49.7	47.7	49.3	49.2	48.7	49.2	51.0	49.1	48.0	48.1	45.7	44.3	42.9
Jobs hard to get	38.4	41.2	38.6	37.5	37.4	37.5	36.9	37.9	39.0	40.3	43.5	46.8	49.1
					Expectations for Six Months Hence: Percent								
Business Conditions													
Better	20.2	18.9	21.5	21.2	21.1	23.7	22.9	22.2	19.3	19.6	19.3	21.5	23.5
Worse	16.0	19.1	14.7	12.5	10.9	12.2	12.1	12.4	15.8	18.5	20.2	23.9	19.9
Same	63.8	62.0	63.8	66.3	68.0	64.1	65.0	65.4	64.9	61.9	60.5	54.6	56.6
Employment													
More jobs	15.9	13.9	15.7	15.1	16.2	18.1	17.4	17.6	13.5	15.4	13.9	16.7	17.5
Fewer jobs	23.7	26.2	22.4	20.2	19.8	19.7	20.8	20.8	23.2	26.9	29.6	31.4	27.9
Same	60.4	59.9	61.9	64.7	64.0	62.2	61.8	61.6	63.3	57.7	56.5	51.9	54.6
Income													
Increase	31.9	28.4	28.6	32.8	30.7	31.4	30.9	30.8	30.4	33.4	29.8	31.4	29.8
Decrease	8.2	9.8	8.2	8.1	7.5	8.1	8.2	7.6	8.0	9.4	9.5	10.3	10.3
Same	59.9	61.8	63.2	59.1	61.8	60.5	60.9	61.6	61.6	57.2	60.7	58.3	59.9
					Plans to Buy Within Six Months: Percent								
Automobile													
Yes	7.0	7.1	7.7	5.7	6.4	6.1	6.5	7.7	7.0	6.6	6.9	7.3	6.0
New	3.4	3.6	4.0	3.2	3.0	3.3	3.3	4.1	3.1	3.6	3.7	3.7	3.4
Used	3.3	3.3	3.4	2.1	2.9	2.5	2.8	3.2	3.4	2.7	2.6	2.9	2.5
Uncertain	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.3	0.6	0.7	0.1
Home													
Yes	2.2	2.7	2.9	2.9	2.5	2.8	1.8	2.5	2.4	2.3	2.4	2.7	2.0
New	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.9	0.3	0.8	0.5	0.6	0.3	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.5
Lived in	1.0	1.5	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.4	0.8	1.4	1.4	1.1	1.3	1.2	1.1
Uncertain	0.5	0.5	0.9	0.7	0.9	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.9	0.4
Major appliances													
Total plans	25.9	24.3	26.2	26.7	25.0	26.1	25.4	29.4	27.5	27.8	27.1	32.7	24.3
Refrigerator	3.2	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	4.4	3.3	4.5	3.4	3.9	3.2	4.0	3.5
Washing machine	3.1	2.7	3.3	3.1	2.7	3.5	3.2	4.0	3.6	3.5	3.7	4.1	3.5
Black and white TV	1.1	0.9	1.2	1.4	1.3	1.4	1.3	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.2	1.4	1.2
Color TV	6.0	5.6	5.7	6.1	6.1	6.0	7.6	6.9	7.1	7.0	7.1	8.5	6.0
Vacuum cleaner	5.0	4.6	5.2	4.6	4.7	5.0	4.3	5.6	5.4	5.0	5.7	5.7	4.3
Range	3.0	2.5	2.6	3.1	2.3	2.5	2.0	2.7	2.4	2.5	2.3	3.0	2.1
Clothes dryer	2.9	2.4	2.6	2.9	2.2	3.3	2.2	3.0	3.1	3.0	2.8	3.6	2.5
Air conditioner	1.6	2.0	2.0	1.9	2.1	2.0	1.5	1.5	1.2	1.5	1.1	2.4	1.2
Carpet	7.9	8.7	9.5	8.1	7.6	7.7	6.0	9.2	8.7	7.1	8.3	9.3	6.7
					Vacation Intended Within Six Months: Percent								
Vacation Intended		43.1		45.4		43.4		44.0		48.9		50.0	
Destination													
Home state		10.5		10.9		9.1		9.1		11.9		11.0	
Other states		29.9		31.7		31.0		31.8		33.4		34.7	
Foreign country		4.0		4.1		4.6		4.5		5.2		5.7	
Means of Travel													
Automobile		30.4		32.8		29.8		29.5		32.7		33.2	
Airplane		12.7		12.1		13.3		14.0		15.4		16.4	
Other		2.6		2.9		3.7		3.3		3.8		3.5	

All 1981 data have been adjusted to reflect that year's revised seasonal factors.

New Series: Beginning May, 1981 the NFO sample includes all types of households, prior to that families only. To link results overlapping surveys were conducted for four months commencing with May. Data are available on request. (p)—preliminary (r)—revised

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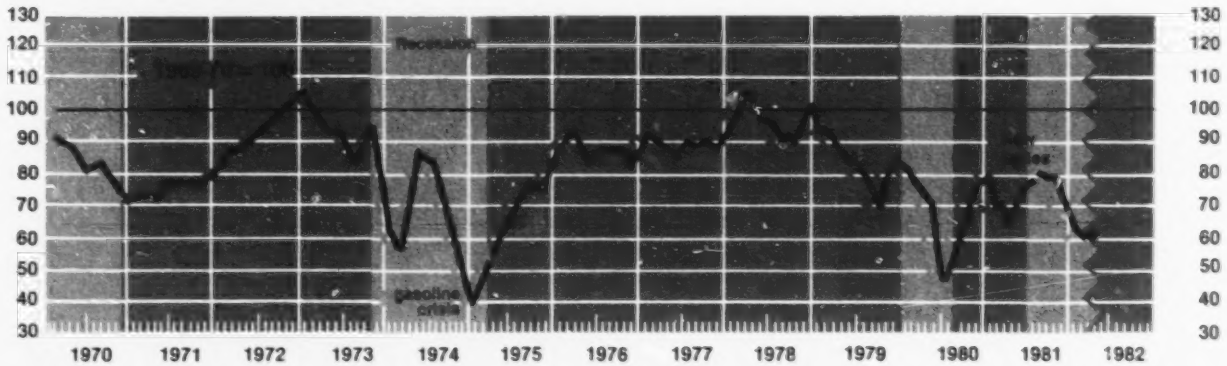
3/29/82 R4105-4 A

Consumer Attitudes and Buying Plans

A Monthly Report from The Conference Board
Based on a Survey Conducted by National Family Opinion, Inc.

Consumer Confidence Index

March, 1982



CONSUMERS LESS OPTIMISTIC BUT PLANS TO BUY FIRM

Consumer confidence, which improved in January after many months of decline, sagged again in February. But the loss was relatively moderate. The Board's Confidence Index (1969-1970 = 100) edged back to 58.2, down about 4 points for the month. However, buying plans were up, although not quite enough to fully offset the big drop in January.

Consumers are especially uneasy in assessing the ongoing situation. Over half of all respondents report that jobs are "hard to get," and only a slightly smaller proportion believe that business conditions are "bad." The consumer's evaluation of the present economic situation is more negative than it has been in many years.

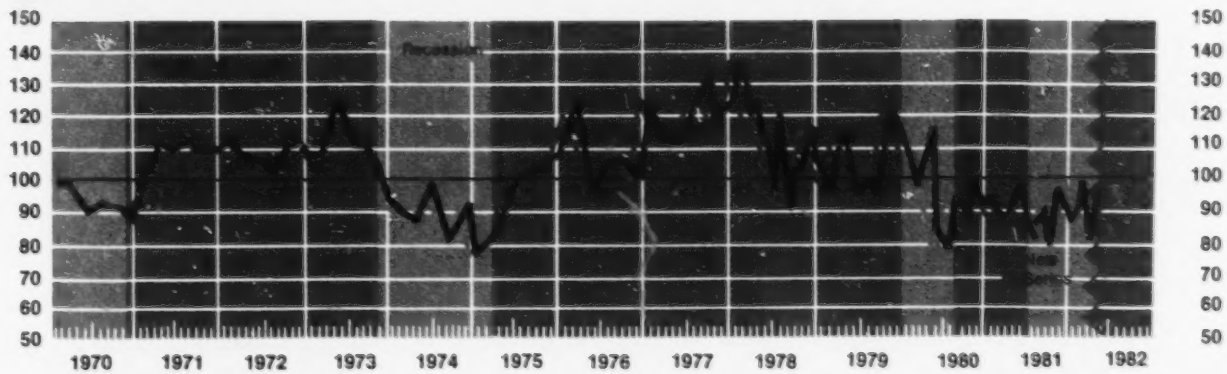
Also, consumers are somewhat less confident in looking ahead to the next six months. More persons than last time fear that business conditions will worsen, and there is also more pessimism about job prospects. Further, fewer respondents than in the prior probe believe that their personal incomes will increase in the months immediately ahead.

Buying plans, however, turned stronger in February after declining substantially in the preceding month. Perhaps an improvement in the weather from the severe conditions experienced earlier this Winter had something to do with that. Whatever the reason, intentions to buy an automobile—new or used—were indicated by 7.6% of all respondents, a gain from 6.4% in the preceding survey. Home buying plans were also up, and substantially. Interest in purchasing a major appliance was marginally stronger.

Vacation plans in February were fractionally off from December, the last month this question was presented. Compared with a year ago, however, this vacation series continues to be quite strong, particularly plans to visit a foreign country.

Fabian Linden

Buying Plans Index



All data seasonally adjusted

Consumer Expectations and Intentions

Based on surveys conducted by National Family Opinion, Inc.
Percentage of all households

All series seasonally adjusted	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	New Series 1981 May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	1982 Jan.(r)	Feb.(p)
Composite Series: Index Numbers, 1969-1970 = 100													
Consumer Confidence Index	63.5	71.8	75.0	79.9	79.6	78.6	78.6	70.4	67.4	61.6	59.4	62.1	58.2
Present Situation	43.1	48.8	51.3	58.9	56.1	56.7	56.4	51.9	48.0	41.1	34.4	32.1	29.6
Expectations	77.0	87.1	90.9	93.9	95.3	93.3	93.4	82.8	80.3	75.2	76.1	82.0	77.3
Buying Plans Index	90.5	98.0	85.9	84.8	89.5	78.7	96.7	90.3	86.2	89.8	99.2	81.3	97.8
Appraisal of Present Situation: Percent													
Business Conditions													
Good	14.4	15.9	15.4	19.4	18.0	19.2	18.4	16.5	16.7	14.2	13.0	12.4	11.9
Bad	34.3	31.1	29.5	25.7	26.6	25.7	25.9	28.7	31.7	35.2	39.5	41.1	45.9
Normal	51.3	53.0	55.1	54.9	55.4	55.1	55.7	54.8	51.6	50.6	47.5	46.5	42.2
Employment													
Jobs plentiful	11.1	12.1	13.3	13.9	13.3	12.1	13.0	13.0	11.6	10.8	8.9	8.4	8.5
Jobs not so plentiful	47.7	49.3	49.2	48.7	49.2	51.0	49.1	48.0	48.1	45.7	44.3	43.4	40.5
Jobs hard to get	41.2	38.6	37.5	37.4	37.5	36.9	37.9	39.0	40.3	43.5	46.8	48.2	51.0
Expectations for Six Months Hence: Percent													
Business Conditions													
Better	18.9	21.5	21.2	21.1	23.7	22.9	22.2	19.3	19.6	19.3	21.5	23.8	22.3
Worse	19.1	14.7	12.5	10.9	12.2	12.1	12.4	15.8	18.5	20.2	23.9	19.9	23.0
Same	62.0	63.8	66.3	68.0	64.1	65.0	65.4	64.9	61.9	60.5	54.6	56.3	54.7
Employment													
More jobs	13.9	15.7	15.1	16.2	18.1	17.4	17.6	13.5	15.4	13.9	16.7	17.7	16.8
Fewer jobs	26.2	22.4	20.2	19.8	19.7	20.6	20.8	23.2	26.9	29.6	31.4	28.1	30.4
Same	59.9	61.9	64.7	64.0	62.2	61.8	61.6	63.3	57.7	56.5	51.9	54.2	52.8
Income													
Increase	28.4	28.6	32.8	30.7	31.4	30.9	30.8	30.4	33.4	29.8	31.4	31.3	29.6
Decrease	9.8	8.2	8.1	7.5	8.1	8.2	7.6	8.0	9.4	9.5	10.3	10.3	10.0
Same	61.8	63.2	59.1	61.8	60.5	60.9	61.6	61.6	57.2	60.7	58.3	58.4	60.4
Plans to Buy Within Six Months: Percent													
Automobile													
Yes	7.1	7.7	5.7	6.4	6.1	6.5	7.7	7.0	6.6	6.9	7.3	6.4	7.6
New	3.6	4.0	3.2	3.0	3.3	3.3	4.1	3.1	3.6	3.7	3.7	3.4	4.0
Used	3.3	3.4	2.1	2.9	2.5	2.8	3.2	3.4	2.7	2.6	2.9	2.9	3.3
Uncertain	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.3	0.6	0.7	0.1	0.3
Home													
Yes	2.7	2.9	2.9	2.5	2.8	1.8	2.5	2.4	2.3	2.4	2.7	2.0	3.1
New	0.7	0.7	0.9	0.3	0.8	0.5	0.6	0.3	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.4	0.6
Lived in	1.5	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.4	0.8	1.4	1.4	1.1	1.3	1.2	1.1	1.8
Uncertain	0.5	0.9	0.7	0.9	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.9	0.5	0.7
Major appliances													
Total plans	24.3	26.2	26.7	25.0	28.1	25.4	29.4	27.5	27.8	27.1	32.7	26.1	27.3
Refrigerator	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	4.4	3.3	4.5	3.4	3.9	3.2	4.0	3.9	3.4
Washing machine	2.7	3.3	3.1	2.7	3.5	3.2	4.0	3.6	3.5	3.7	4.1	3.6	4.0
Black and white TV	0.9	1.2	1.4	1.3	1.4	1.3	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.2	1.4	1.2	1.3
Color TV	5.6	5.7	6.1	6.1	6.0	7.6	6.9	7.1	7.0	7.1	8.5	6.4	7.0
Vacuum cleaner	4.6	5.2	4.6	4.7	5.0	4.3	5.6	5.4	5.0	5.7	5.7	4.6	5.1
Range	2.5	2.6	3.1	2.3	2.5	2.0	2.7	2.4	2.5	2.3	3.0	2.2	2.2
Clothes dryer	2.4	2.6	2.9	2.2	3.3	2.2	3.0	3.1	3.0	2.8	3.6	2.7	3.0
Air conditioner	2.0	2.0	1.9	2.1	2.0	1.5	1.5	1.2	1.5	1.1	2.4	1.5	1.3
Carpet	8.7	9.5	8.1	7.6	7.7	6.0	9.2	8.7	7.1	8.3	9.3	7.3	7.1
Vacation Intended Within Six Months: Percent													
Vacation Intended	43.1		45.4		43.4		44.0		48.9		50.0		48.8
Destination													
Home state	10.5		10.9		9.1		9.1		11.9		11.0		10.1
Other states	29.9		31.7		31.0		31.8		33.4		34.7		33.7
Foreign country	4.0		4.1		4.6		4.5		5.2		5.7		6.3
Means of Travel													
Automobile	30.4		32.8		29.8		29.5		32.7		33.2		32.3
Airplane	12.7		12.1		13.3		14.0		15.4		16.4		16.5
Other	2.6		2.9		3.7		3.3		3.8		3.5		3.4

All 1981 data have been adjusted to reflect that year's revised seasonal factors.

New Series: Beginning May, 1981 the NFO sample includes all types of households, prior to that families only. To link results overlapping surveys were conducted for four mounts commencing with May. Data are available on request. (p)—preliminary (r)—revised

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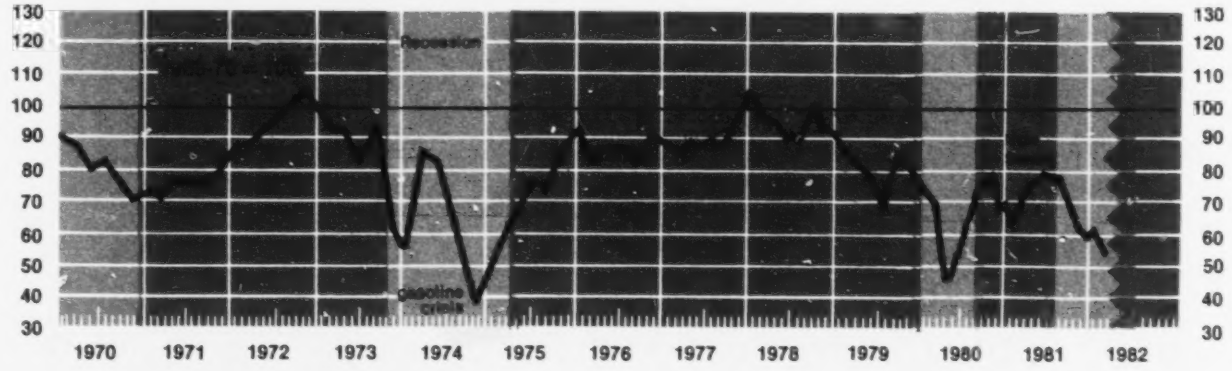
4/26/82 R4105-4 a

Consumer Attitudes and Buying Plans

A Monthly Report from The Conference Board
Based on a Survey Conducted by National Family Opinion, inc.

Consumer Confidence Index

April, 1982



CONFIDENCE CONTINUES DECLINE BUYING PLANS WEAKEN

The consumer's spirits have continued to sag. In March, the Board's Confidence Index (1969-1970 = 100) dropped to 53.3, a loss of almost five points. Confidence is now weaker than it has been since the 1980 recession. Consumers are especially uneasy with the current situation and have grown less optimistic in assessing the future. Buying plans are down moderately following a fairly sturdy gain the previous month.

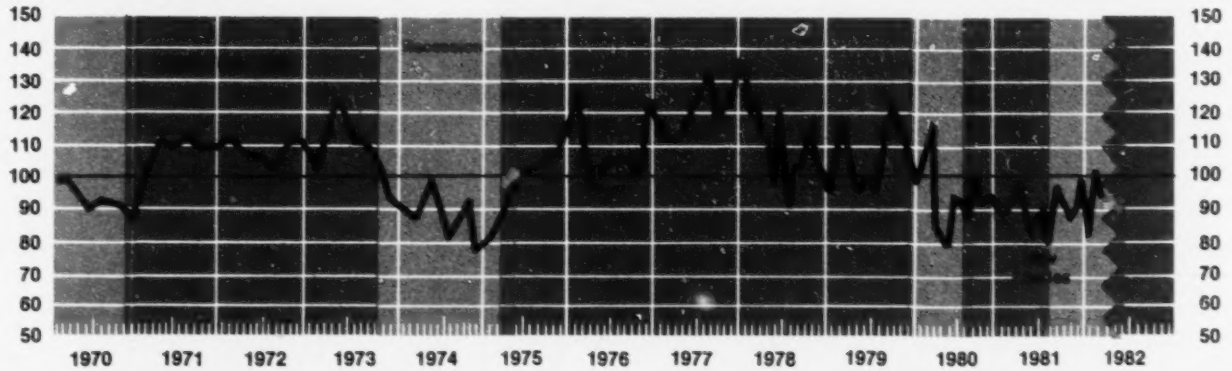
Consumers are now more dissatisfied with ongoing conditions than they have been since the severe recession in 1974. Both the proportion of those who believe business is "bad" and the proportion of those who complain that jobs are "hard to get" are at record highs. On the issue of business conditions, pessimists outnumber optimists by almost fivefold, and on the issue of employment, by over sixfold.

In looking ahead to the next six months, consumers have grown increasingly apprehensive. More persons than last time are uneasy about the employment outlook, and there has also been a rather marked rise in the number of those who fear that their income will decline in the near future. However, while consumer expectations are edging down, they are still reassuringly higher than in any previous recession. This suggests that consumers could respond quickly to even a moderate improvement in business and make for a more vigorous recovery than is generally anticipated.

Plans to buy are down for all items included in the survey. Intentions to purchase a car—new or used—were expressed by 7.5% of all respondents. This represents only a fractional loss as compared with the month preceding. Intentions to purchase a home edged back to 2.9% of all respondents, down from 3.2% in February. Finally, interest in major appliances was also down marginally.

Fabian Linden

Buying Plans Index



All data seasonally adjusted

Consumer Expectations and Intentions

Based on surveys conducted by National Family Opinion, Inc.
Percentage of all households

			New Series										
			1981								1982		
All series seasonally adjusted	*Mar.*	*Apr.*	*May*	*June*	*July*	*Aug.*	*Sept.*	*Oct.*	*Nov.*	*Dec.*	*Jan.*	*Feb.(r)*	*Mar.(p)*
Composite Series: Index Numbers, 1969-1970 = 100													
Consumer Confidence Index	71.8	75.0	79.9	79.6	78.6	78.6	70.4	67.4	61.6	59.4	62.1	58.1	53.3
Present Situation	48.8	51.3	58.9	56.1	56.7	56.4	51.9	48.0	41.1	34.4	32.1	30.0	25.7
Expectations	87.1	90.9	93.9	95.3	93.3	93.4	82.8	80.3	75.2	76.1	82.0	76.9	71.8
Buying Plans Index	98.0	85.9	84.8	89.5	78.7	96.7	90.3	86.2	89.8	99.2	81.3	100.9	94.1
Appraisal of Present Situation: Percent													
Business Conditions													
Good	15.9	15.4	19.4	18.0	19.2	18.4	16.5	16.7	14.2	13.0	12.4	12.0	10.0
Bad	31.1	29.5	25.7	26.6	25.7	25.9	28.7	31.7	35.2	39.5	41.1	45.6	47.1
Normal	53.0	55.1	54.9	55.4	55.1	55.7	54.8	51.6	50.6	47.5	46.5	42.4	42.9
Employment													
Jobs plentiful	12.1	13.3	13.9	13.3	12.1	13.0	13.0	11.6	10.8	8.9	8.4	8.7	7.7
Jobs not so plentiful	49.3	49.2	48.7	49.2	51.0	49.1	48.0	48.1	45.7	44.3	43.4	40.5	40.1
Jobs hard to get	38.6	37.5	37.4	37.5	36.9	37.9	39.0	40.3	43.5	46.8	48.2	50.8	52.2
Expectations for Six Months Hence: Percent													
Business Conditions													
Better	21.5	21.2	21.1	23.7	22.9	22.2	19.3	19.6	19.3	21.5	23.8	21.9	20.6
Worse	14.7	12.5	10.9	12.2	12.1	12.4	15.8	18.5	20.2	23.9	19.9	22.9	22.4
Same	63.8	66.3	68.0	64.1	65.0	65.4	64.9	61.9	60.5	54.6	56.3	55.2	57.0
Employment													
More jobs	15.7	15.1	16.2	18.1	17.4	17.6	13.5	15.4	13.9	15.7	17.7	16.5	15.7
Fewer jobs	22.4	20.2	19.8	19.7	20.8	20.8	23.2	26.9	29.6	31.4	28.1	30.9	32.9
Same	61.9	64.7	64.0	62.2	61.8	61.6	63.3	57.7	56.5	51.9	54.2	52.6	51.4
Income													
Increase	28.6	32.8	30.7	31.4	30.9	30.8	30.4	33.4	29.8	31.4	31.3	29.9	25.6
Decrease	8.2	8.1	7.5	8.1	8.2	7.6	8.0	9.4	9.5	10.3	10.3	9.8	12.1
Same	63.2	59.1	61.8	60.5	60.9	61.6	61.6	57.2	60.7	58.3	58.4	60.3	62.3
Plans to Buy Within Six Months: Percent													
Automobile													
Yes	7.7	5.7	6.4	6.1	6.5	7.7	7.0	6.6	6.9	7.3	6.4	7.8	7.5
New	4.0	3.2	3.0	3.3	3.3	4.1	3.1	3.6	3.7	3.7	3.4	3.9	3.8
Used	3.4	2.1	2.9	2.5	2.8	3.2	3.4	2.7	2.6	2.9	2.9	3.5	3.2
Uncertain	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.3	0.6	0.7	0.1	0.4	0.5
Home													
Yes	2.9	2.9	2.5	2.8	1.8	2.5	2.4	2.3	2.4	2.7	2.0	3.2	2.9
New	0.7	0.9	0.3	0.8	0.5	0.6	0.3	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.6
Lived in	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.4	0.8	1.4	1.4	1.1	1.3	1.2	1.1	2.0	1.4
Uncertain	0.9	0.7	0.9	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.9	0.5	0.6	0.9
Major appliances													
Total plans	26.2	26.7	25.0	28.1	25.4	29.4	27.5	27.8	27.1	32.7	26.1	28.9	27.4
Refrigerator	3.6	3.6	3.6	4.4	3.3	4.5	3.4	3.9	3.2	4.0	3.9	3.5	3.6
Washing machine	3.3	3.1	2.7	3.5	3.2	4.0	3.6	3.5	3.7	4.1	3.6	4.2	3.6
Black and white TV	1.2	1.4	1.3	1.4	1.3	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.2	1.4	1.2	1.4	1.2
Color TV	5.7	6.1	6.1	6.0	7.6	6.9	7.1	7.0	7.1	8.5	6.4	7.2	6.9
Vacuum cleaner	5.2	4.6	4.7	5.0	4.3	5.6	5.4	5.0	5.7	5.7	4.6	5.5	5.0
Range	2.6	3.1	2.3	2.5	2.0	2.7	2.4	2.5	2.3	3.0	2.2	2.3	2.3
Clothes dryer	2.6	2.9	2.2	3.3	2.2	3.0	3.1	3.0	2.8	3.6	2.7	3.4	3.3
Air conditioner	2.0	1.9	2.1	2.0	1.5	1.5	1.2	1.5	1.1	2.4	1.5	1.4	1.5
Carpet	9.5	8.1	7.6	7.7	6.0	9.2	8.7	7.1	8.3	9.3	7.3	7.1	6.7
Vacation Intended Within Six Months: Percent													
Vacation Intended		45.4		43.4		44.0		48.9		50.0		48.9	
Destination													
Home state		10.9		9.1		9.1		11.9		11.0		10.2	
Other states		31.7		31.0		31.8		33.4		34.7		34.1	
Foreign country		4.1		4.6		4.5		5.2		5.7		6.2	
Means of Travel													
Automobile		32.8		29.8		29.5		32.7		33.2		32.7	
Airplane		12.1		13.3		14.0		15.4		16.4		16.5	
Other		2.9		3.7		3.3		3.8		3.5		3.4	

All 1981 data have been adjusted to reflect that year's revised seasonal factors.

New Series: Beginning May, 1981 the NFO sample includes all types of households, prior to that families only. To link results overlapping surveys were conducted for four months commencing with May. Data are available on request. (p)—preliminary (r)—revised

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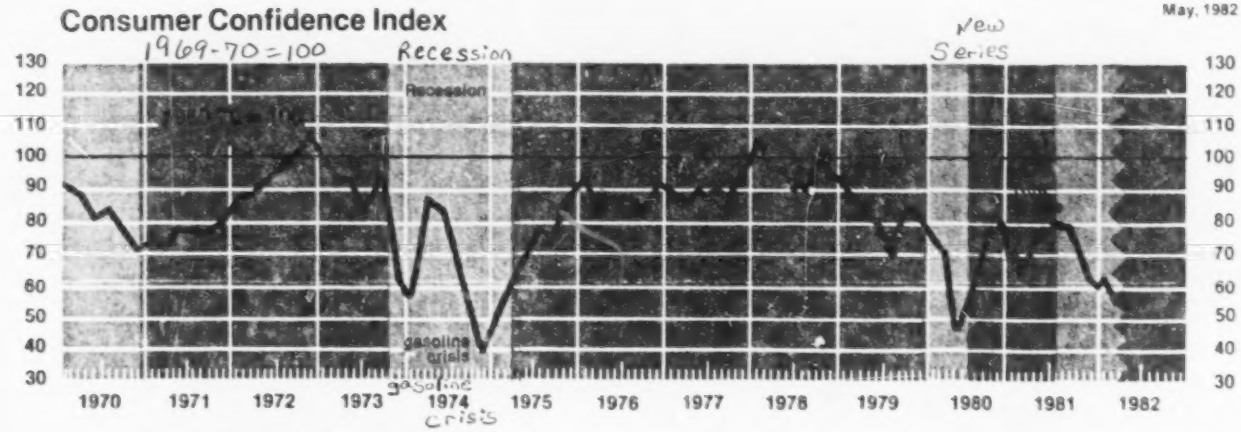
4/2/82 R4105 - 4

Consumer Attitudes and Buying Plans

A Monthly Report from The Conference Board
Based on a Survey Conducted by National Family Opinion, Inc.

May, 1982



CONSUMER EXPECTATIONS IMPROVE BUT BUYING PLANS DROP

Consumer confidence remained steady in April. In looking ahead to the next six months, consumers are somewhat more optimistic now than they were a month ago, but there is growing concern about ongoing economic conditions. Plans to buy are down sharply.

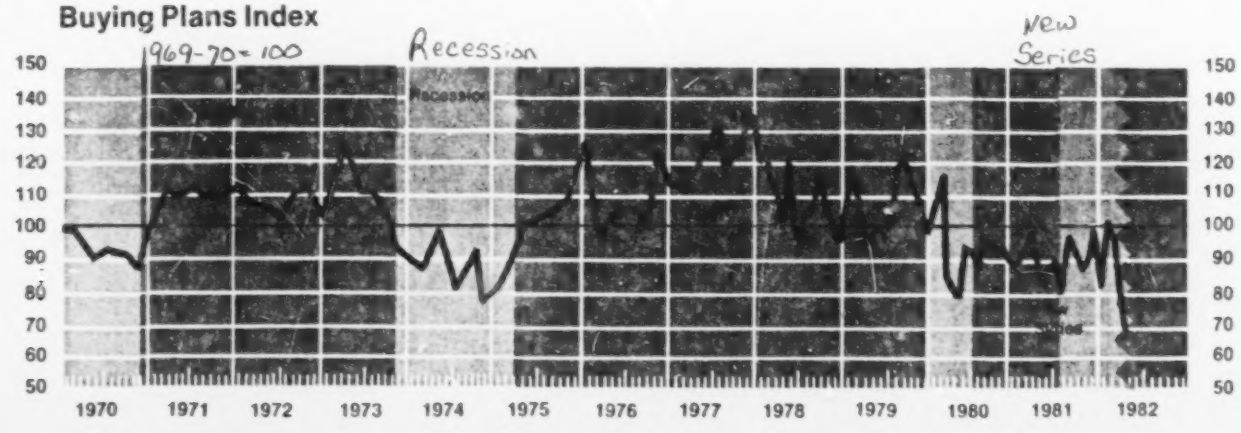
In their assessment of the present situation, consumers are more negative than ever before in the 15-year history of this survey program. Substantially over half of all respondents regard current business conditions as "bad," and substantially over half report that jobs are "hard to get."

Nevertheless, consumers have grown slightly more positive in their expectations for the months immediately ahead. Somewhat fewer respondents than last time are concerned that business conditions will worsen, and fewer are worried about future employment prospects. There was a decline in April in the proportion of those who expect their incomes to increase in the months to come.

Buying plans have dropped for all items covered in the survey—automobiles, homes and appliances. In every instance, plans to purchase are now running lower than in a long time. Vacation plans, too, are softer.

Although the improvement in consumer expectations is still too slight and too recent to be convincing, it is at least faintly encouraging news. This segment of the survey has an impressive track record for predicting business trends. In fact, the "expectational" component of the survey has held up surprisingly well in the present recession. During the 1980 downturn, that series dropped to a low of 48; its current reading is a more reassuring 75. In any event, this most recent reading from the consumer sector is not inconsistent with the projected upturn in business by midyear that is being promised by most economic forecasters.

Fabian Linden



All data seasonally adjusted

Consumer Expectations and Intentions

Based on surveys conducted by National Family Opinion, Inc.
Percentage of all households

All series seasonally adjusted	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.(r)	Apr.(p)
		New Series											
		1981								1982			
Composite Series: Index Numbers, 1969-1970 = 100													
Consumer Confidence Index	75.0	79.9	79.6	78.6	78.6	70.4	67.4	61.6	59.4	62.1	58.1	53.3	53.1
Present Situation	51.3	58.9	56.1	56.7	56.4	51.9	48.0	41.1	34.4	32.1	30.0	25.5	20.1
Expectations	90.9	93.9	95.3	93.3	93.4	82.8	80.3	75.2	76.1	82.0	76.9	71.8	75.0
Buying Plans Index	85.9	84.8	89.5	78.7	96.7	90.3	86.2	89.8	99.2	81.3	100.9	94.8	67.7
Appraisal of Present Situation: Percent													
Business Conditions													
Good	15.4	19.4	18.0	19.2	18.4	16.5	16.7	14.2	13.0	12.4	12.0	9.9	9.4
Bad	29.5	25.7	26.6	25.7	25.9	28.7	31.7	35.2	39.5	41.1	45.6	47.3	54.3
Normal	55.1	54.9	55.4	55.1	55.7	54.8	51.6	50.6	47.5	46.5	42.4	42.8	36.3
Employment													
Jobs plentiful	13.3	13.9	13.3	12.1	13.0	13.0	11.6	10.8	8.9	8.4	8.7	7.7	5.8
Jobs not so plentiful	49.2	48.7	49.2	51.0	49.1	48.0	48.1	45.7	44.3	43.4	40.5	40.1	36.1
Jobs hard to get	37.5	37.4	37.5	36.9	37.9	39.0	40.3	43.5	46.8	48.2	50.8	52.2	58.1
Expectations for Six Months Hence: Percent													
Business Conditions													
Better	21.2	21.1	23.7	22.9	22.2	19.3	19.6	19.3	21.5	23.8	21.9	20.6	21.9
Worse	12.5	10.9	12.2	12.1	12.4	15.8	18.5	20.2	23.9	19.9	22.9	22.6	19.6
Same	66.3	68.0	64.1	65.0	65.4	64.9	61.9	60.5	54.6	56.3	55.2	56.8	58.5
Employment													
More jobs	15.1	16.2	18.1	17.4	17.6	13.5	15.4	13.9	16.7	17.7	16.5	15.9	16.9
Fewer jobs	20.2	19.8	19.7	20.8	20.8	23.2	26.9	29.6	31.4	28.1	30.9	33.3	29.2
Same	64.7	64.0	62.2	61.8	61.6	63.3	57.7	56.5	51.9	54.2	52.6	50.8	53.9
Income													
increase	32.8	30.7	31.4	30.9	30.8	30.4	33.4	29.8	31.4	31.3	29.9	25.8	21.4
Decrease	8.1	7.5	8.1	8.2	7.6	8.0	9.4	9.5	10.3	10.3	9.8	12.1	12.3
Same	59.1	61.8	60.5	60.9	61.6	61.6	57.2	60.7	58.3	58.4	60.3	62.1	66.3
Plans to Buy Within Six Months: Percent													
Automobile													
Yes	5.7	6.4	6.1	6.5	7.7	7.0	6.6	6.9	7.3	6.4	7.8	7.4	5.0
New	3.2	3.0	3.3	3.3	4.1	3.1	3.6	3.7	3.7	3.4	3.9	3.8	2.5
Used	2.1	2.9	2.5	2.8	3.2	3.4	2.7	2.6	2.9	2.9	3.5	3.1	2.1
Uncertain	0.4	0.5	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.3	0.6	0.7	0.1	0.4	0.5	0.4
Home													
Yes	2.9	2.5	2.8	1.8	2.5	2.4	2.3	2.4	2.7	2.0	3.2	3.0	1.9
New	0.9	0.3	0.8	0.5	0.6	0.3	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.6	0.2
Lived in	1.3	1.3	1.4	0.8	1.4	1.4	1.1	1.3	1.2	1.1	2.0	1.5	1.3
Uncertain	0.7	0.9	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.9	0.5	0.6	0.9	0.4
Major appliances													
Total plans	26.7	25.0	28.1	25.4	29.4	27.5	27.8	27.1	32.7	26.1	28.9	27.6	22.0
Refrigerator	3.6	3.6	4.4	3.3	4.5	3.4	3.9	3.2	4.0	3.9	3.5	3.6	2.9
Washing machine	3.1	2.7	3.5	3.2	4.0	3.6	3.5	3.7	4.1	3.6	4.2	3.7	2.7
Black and white TV	1.4	1.3	1.4	1.3	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.2	1.4	1.2	1.4	1.3	0.9
Color TV	6.1	6.1	6.0	7.6	6.9	7.1	7.0	7.1	8.5	6.4	7.2	7.0	5.7
Vacuum cleaner	4.6	4.7	5.0	4.3	5.6	5.4	5.0	5.7	5.7	4.6	5.5	4.9	4.1
Range	3.1	2.3	2.5	2.0	2.7	2.4	2.5	2.3	3.0	2.2	2.3	2.3	2.0
Clothes dryer	2.9	2.2	3.3	2.2	3.0	3.1	3.0	2.8	3.6	2.7	3.4	3.3	2.4
Air conditioner	1.9	2.1	2.0	1.5	1.5	1.2	1.5	1.1	2.4	1.5	1.4	1.5	1.3
Carpet	8.1	7.6	7.7	6.6	9.2	8.7	7.1	8.3	9.3	7.3	7.1	6.8	5.9
Vacation Intended Within Six Months: Percent													
Vacation Intended	45.4		43.4		44.0		48.9		50.0		48.9		45.2
Destination													
Home state	10.9		9.1		9.1		11.9		11.0		10.2		8.9
Other states	31.7		31.0		31.8		33.4		34.7		34.1		32.8
Foreign country	4.1		4.6		4.5		5.2		5.7		6.2		4.9
Means of Travel													
Automobile	32.8		29.8		29.5		32.7		33.2		32.7		29.6
Airplane	12.1		13.3		14.0		15.4		16.4		16.5		14.9
Other	2.9		3.7		3.3		3.8		3.5		3.4		4.8

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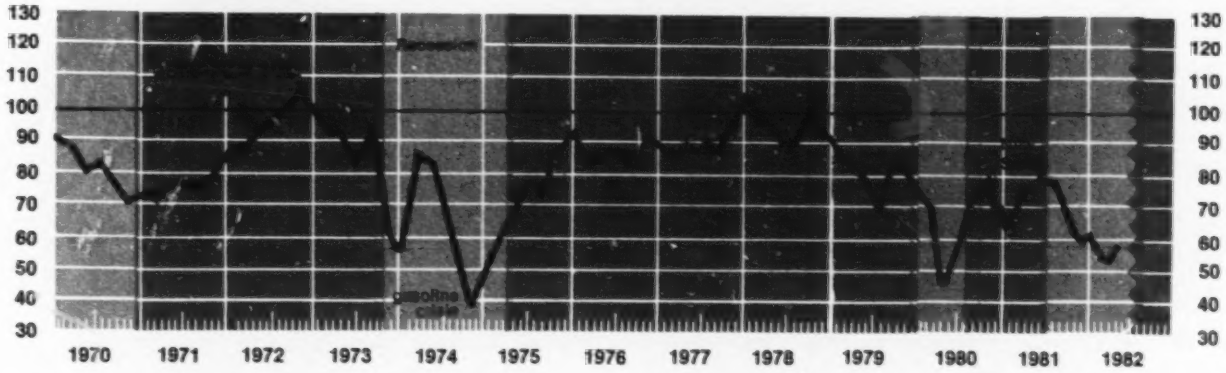


CONFIDENCE AND BUYING PLANS IMPROVE

The consumers' spirits have improved for the second consecutive month. The Board's Confidence Index inched up marginally in April, and registered a good gain in May. The latest Index reading (1969-1970 = 100) is 58.3, up over four points from the preceding probe. Buying plans, too, are a little stronger but the gain is unimpressive given the sharp drop registered in the preceding survey.

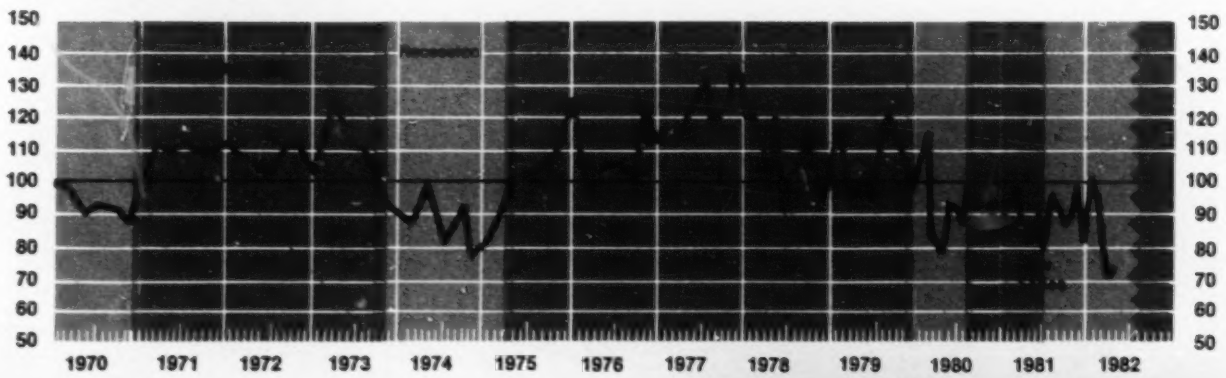
In the past two months consumers have grown more optimistic in their assessment of likely developments in the immediate period ahead. This is encouraging since expectations have proven to be a leading indicator of economic trends. In the most recent probe this particular component of the survey registered a heartening 5.5 point gain following a good improvement in the previous month. A rising proportion of respondents expect business conditions to improve, and that jobs will become more available over the next months. Also, more persons than last time believe that their personal incomes will increase.

Buying plans moved up marginally in May, but the gain was slight given the sharp decline in this series last time. Plans to buy an automobile within the next six months were indicated by 5.7% of respondents, up from a previous 5.0 percent. Intentions to purchase a home were reported by 2% of those contacted, about the same proportion picked up in the preceding month. Interest in appliances is a bit stronger but again the gain was too small to be significant.

Actually, throughout the current downturn the consumers' confidence in the short-term future held up surprisingly well, as compared with prior recession experiences. This, together with the recent improvement in expectations, suggests that consumers may lead the coming recovery, and, in fact, contribute to a more robust expansion than is currently projected by the forecasting fraternity.

Fabian Linden

Buying Plans Index



All data seasonally adjusted

BEST AVAILABLE COPY

Consumer Expectations and Intentions

Based on surveys conducted by National Family Opinion, Inc.
Percentage of all households

New Series

All series seasonally adjusted	1981 May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	1982 Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.(r)	May(p)
Composite Series: Index Numbers, 1969-1970 = 100													
Consumer Confidence Index	79.9	79.6	78.6	78.6	70.4	67.4	61.6	59.4	62.1	58.1	53.3	54.0	58.3
Present Situation	58.9	56.1	56.7	56.4	51.9	48.0	41.1	34.4	32.1	30.0	25.5	21.0	23.7
Expectations	93.9	95.3	93.3	93.4	82.8	80.3	75.2	76.1	82.0	76.9	71.8	76.0	81.5
Buying Plans Index	84.8	89.5	78.7	96.7	90.3	88.2	89.8	99.2	81.3	100.9	94.8	70.3	74.0
Business Conditions													
Good	19.4	18.0	19.2	18.4	16.5	16.7	14.2	13.0	12.4	12.0	9.9	9.7	10.8
Bad	25.7	26.6	25.7	25.9	28.7	31.7	35.2	39.5	41.1	45.6	47.3	53.6	47.6
Normal	54.9	55.4	55.1	55.7	54.8	51.6	50.6	47.5	46.5	42.4	42.8	36.7	41.6
Employment													
Jobs plentiful	13.9	13.3	12.1	13.0	13.0	11.6	10.8	8.9	8.4	8.7	7.7	6.0	5.8
Jobs not so plentiful	48.7	49.2	51.0	49.1	46.0	48.1	45.7	44.3	43.4	40.5	40.1	36.9	41.5
Jobs hard to get	37.4	37.5	36.9	37.9	39.0	40.3	43.5	46.8	48.2	50.8	52.2	57.1	52.7
Expectations for Six Months Hence: Percent													
Business Conditions													
Better	21.1	23.7	22.9	22.2	19.3	19.6	19.3	21.5	23.8	21.9	20.6	22.1	23.3
Worse	10.9	12.2	12.1	12.4	15.8	18.5	20.2	23.9	19.9	22.9	22.6	19.3	17.8
Same	68.0	64.1	65.0	65.4	64.9	61.9	60.5	54.6	56.3	55.2	56.8	58.6	58.9
Employment													
More jobs	18.2	18.1	17.4	17.6	13.5	15.4	13.9	16.7	17.7	16.5	15.9	16.7	17.9
Fewer jobs	19.8	19.7	20.8	20.8	23.2	26.9	29.6	31.4	28.1	30.9	33.3	28.3	26.9
Same	64.0	62.2	61.8	61.6	63.3	57.7	56.5	51.9	54.2	52.6	50.8	55.0	55.2
Income													
Increase	30.7	31.4	30.9	30.8	30.4	33.4	29.8	31.4	31.3	29.9	25.8	22.1	24.3
Decrease	7.5	8.1	8.2	7.6	8.0	9.4	9.5	10.3	10.3	9.8	12.1	12.3	11.0
Same	61.8	60.5	60.9	61.6	61.6	57.2	60.7	58.3	58.4	60.3	62.1	65.6	64.7
Plans to Buy Within Six Months: Percent													
Automobile													
Yes	6.4	6.1	6.5	7.7	7.0	6.6	6.9	7.3	6.4	7.8	7.4	5.0	5.7
New	3.0	3.3	3.3	4.1	3.1	3.6	3.7	3.7	3.4	3.9	3.8	2.5	2.7
Used	2.9	2.5	2.8	3.2	3.4	2.7	2.8	2.9	2.9	3.5	3.1	2.2	2.7
Uncertain	0.5	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.3	0.6	0.7	0.1	0.4	0.5	0.3	0.3
Home													
Yes	2.5	2.8	1.8	2.5	2.4	2.3	2.4	2.7	2.0	3.2	3.0	2.1	2.0
New	0.3	0.8	0.5	0.6	0.3	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.6	0.3	0.5
Lived in	1.3	1.4	0.8	1.4	1.4	1.1	1.3	1.2	1.1	2.0	1.5	1.4	1.1
Uncertain	0.9	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.9	0.5	0.6	0.9	0.4	0.4
Major appliances													
Total plans	25.0	26.1	25.4	29.4	27.5	27.8	27.1	32.7	26.1	28.9	27.6	22.7	23.5
Refrigerator	3.6	4.4	3.3	4.5	3.4	3.9	3.2	4.0	3.9	3.5	3.6	2.9	3.2
Washing machine	2.7	3.5	3.2	4.0	3.6	3.5	3.7	4.1	3.6	4.2	3.7	2.9	3.5
Black and white TV	1.3	1.4	1.3	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.2	1.4	1.2	1.4	1.3	1.0	0.8
Color TV	6.1	6.0	7.6	6.9	7.1	7.0	7.1	8.5	6.4	7.2	7.0	5.8	5.4
Vacuum cleaner	4.7	5.0	4.3	5.6	5.4	5.0	5.7	5.7	4.6	5.5	4.9	4.0	4.2
Range	2.3	2.5	2.0	2.7	2.4	2.5	2.3	3.0	2.2	2.3	2.3	2.1	2.2
Clothes dryer	2.2	3.3	2.2	3.0	3.1	3.0	2.8	3.6	2.7	3.4	3.3	2.6	2.9
Air conditioner	2.1	2.0	1.5	1.5	1.2	1.5	1.1	2.4	1.5	1.4	1.5	1.4	1.3
Carpet	7.6	7.7	6.0	9.2	8.7	7.1	8.3	9.3	7.3	7.1	6.8	6.0	5.9
Vacation Intended Within Six Months: Percent													
Vacation Intended		43.4		44.0		48.9		50.0		48.9		44.9	
Destination													
Home state		9.1		9.1		11.9		11.0		10.2		9.1	
Other states		31.0		31.8		33.4		34.7		34.1		32.4	
Foreign country		4.6		4.5		5.2		5.7		6.2		4.8	
Means of Travel													
Automobile		29.8		29.5		32.7		33.2		32.7		29.7	
Airplane		13.3		14.0		15.4		16.4		16.5		14.8	
Other		3.7		3.3		3.8		3.5		3.4		4.4	

All 1981 data have been adjusted to reflect that year's revised seasonal factors.

New Series: Beginning May, 1981 the NFO sample includes all types of households, prior to that families only. To link results overlapping surveys were conducted for four months commencing with May. Data are available on request. (p)—preliminary (r)—revised

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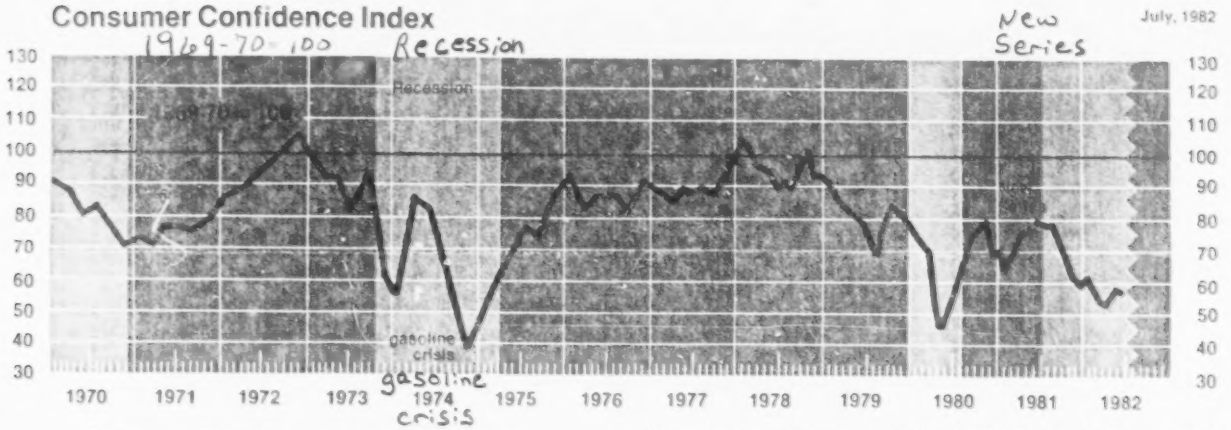
8/10/82 R4105-4

Consumer Attitudes and Buying Plans

A Monthly Report from The Conference Board
Based on a Survey Conducted by National Family Opinion, Inc.



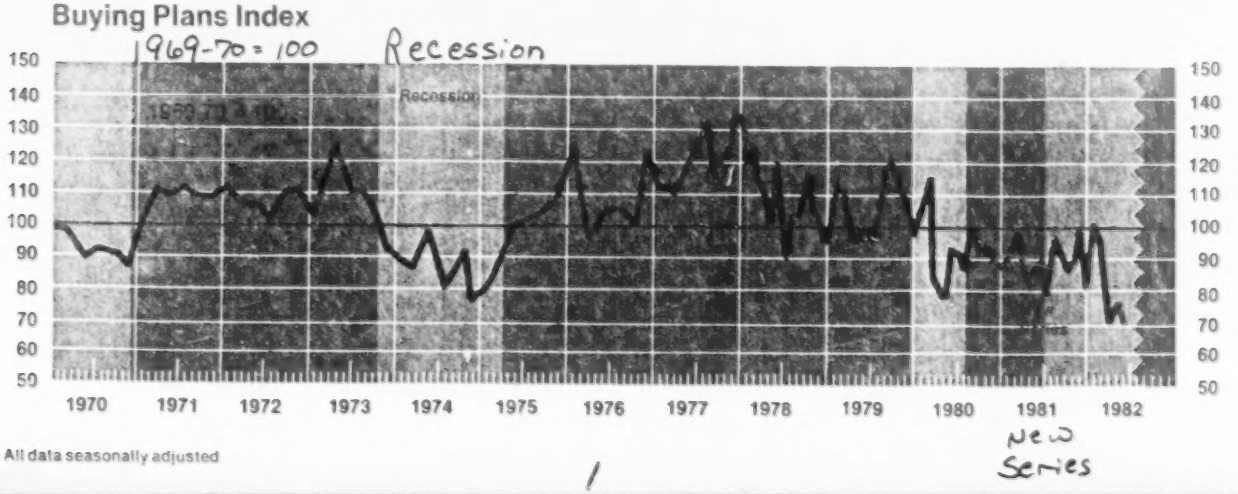
Consumer Optimism and Spending Plans Down Moderately

The measure of consumer confidence edged off slightly in June, following two consecutive months of gain. The current Index reading (1969-1970=100) is 57.1, a loss of 1.2 points compared with the preceding survey. All of the decline reflects consumers' increasing concern with the present situation. Their expectations for the future, in fact, have improved slightly. Buying plans, however, registered a small loss.

The consumers' assessment of the current scene is at an all-time low in the history of the survey. One of every two respondents regards current business conditions as "bad"; close to three out of every five complain that jobs are "hard to get." However, in assessing developments in the period ahead, consumers are slightly more optimistic than in the preceding month. More now say employment conditions will improve during the next six months. Athough consumer expectations increased only marginally in June, it represented the third consecutive gain in this series—which has an impressive record as a leading economic indicator.

Buying plans were steady to soft. Of all those contacted, 5.9%—about the same proportion as last time—indicated plans to buy an automobile. This series continues at a relatively low level. Plans to purchase appliances were off fractionally, interest in homes sharply.

The latest signals from the consumer are rather indecisive. Although expectations have improved, the gain was not a significant follow-through of the vitality registered in the preceding two months. Survey readings appear to be consistent with the general professional outlook that the economy will recover from the recession during the next months. But this view is now being presented with somewhat less conviction than a few months ago—and the consumer survey, too, appears to be delivering a less decisive message. Consumers are somewhat more optimistic in assessing the future, but there are still few signs of enthusiasm. Fabian Linden



All data seasonally adjusted

Consumer Expectations and Intentions

Based on surveys conducted by National Family Opinion, Inc.
Percentage of all households

All series seasonally adjusted	1981 June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	1982 Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May(r)	June(p)
Composite Series: Index Numbers, 1969-1970 = 100													
Consumer Confidence Index	79.6	78.6	78.6	70.4	67.4	61.6	59.4	62.1	58.1	53.3	54.0	58.3	57.1
Present Situation	56.1	56.7	56.4	51.9	48.0	41.1	34.4	32.1	30.0	25.5	21.0	23.5	18.6
Expectations	95.3	93.3	93.4	82.8	80.3	75.2	76.1	82.0	76.9	71.8	76.0	81.6	82.8
Buying Plans Index	89.5	78.7	96.7	90.3	86.2	89.6	99.2	81.3	100.9	94.8	70.3	74.9	70.4
Appraisal of Present Situation: Percent													
Business Conditions													
Good	18.0	19.2	18.4	16.5	16.7	14.2	13.0	12.4	12.0	9.9	9.7	10.6	9.3
Bad	26.6	25.7	25.9	28.7	31.7	35.2	39.5	41.1	45.6	47.3	53.6	47.6	50.3
Normal	55.4	55.1	55.7	54.8	51.6	50.6	47.5	46.5	42.4	42.8	36.7	41.8	40.4
Employment													
Jobs plentiful	13.3	12.1	13.0	13.0	11.6	10.8	8.9	8.4	8.7	7.7	6.0	5.8	4.2
Jobs not so plentiful	49.2	51.0	49.1	48.0	48.1	45.7	44.3	43.4	40.5	40.1	36.9	41.3	39.5
Jobs hard to get	37.5	36.9	37.9	39.0	40.3	43.5	46.8	48.2	50.8	52.2	57.1	52.9	56.3
Expectations for Six Months Hence: Percent													
Business Conditions													
Better	23.7	22.9	22.2	19.3	19.6	19.3	21.5	23.8	21.9	20.6	22.1	23.4	22.4
Worse	12.2	12.1	12.4	15.8	16.5	20.2	23.9	19.9	22.9	22.6	19.3	18.0	18.1
Same	64.1	65.0	65.4	64.9	61.9	60.5	54.6	56.3	55.2	56.8	58.6	58.6	59.5
Employment													
More jobs	18.1	17.4	17.6	13.5	15.4	13.9	16.7	17.7	16.5	15.9	16.7	18.1	19.6
Fewer jobs	19.7	20.8	20.8	23.2	26.9	29.6	31.4	28.1	30.9	33.3	28.3	26.8	24.9
Same	62.2	61.8	61.6	63.3	57.7	56.5	51.9	54.2	52.6	50.8	55.0	55.1	55.5
Income													
Increase	31.4	30.9	30.8	30.4	33.4	29.8	31.4	31.3	29.9	25.8	22.1	24.5	22.8
Decrease	8.1	8.2	7.6	8.0	9.4	9.5	10.3	10.3	9.8	12.1	12.3	11.0	10.8
Same	60.5	60.9	61.6	61.6	57.2	60.7	58.3	58.4	60.3	62.1	65.6	64.5	66.4
Plans to Buy Within Six Months: Percent													
Automobile													
Yes	6.1	6.5	7.7	7.0	6.6	6.9	7.3	6.4	7.8	7.4	5.0	5.8	5.9
New	3.3	3.3	4.1	3.1	3.6	3.7	3.7	3.4	3.9	3.8	2.5	2.7	3.2
Used	2.5	2.8	3.2	3.4	2.7	2.6	2.9	2.9	3.5	3.1	2.2	2.7	2.4
Uncertain	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.3	0.6	0.7	0.1	0.4	0.5	0.3	0.4	0.3
Home													
Yes	2.8	1.8	2.5	2.4	2.3	2.4	2.7	2.0	3.2	3.0	2.1	2.0	1.6
New	0.8	0.5	0.6	0.3	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.6	0.3	0.5	0.3
Lived in	1.4	0.8	1.4	1.4	1.1	1.3	1.2	1.1	2.0	1.5	1.4	1.1	0.8
Uncertain	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.9	0.5	0.6	0.9	0.4	0.4	0.5
Major appliances													
Total plans	28.1	25.4	29.4	27.5	27.8	27.1	32.7	26.1	28.9	27.6	22.7	23.9	22.3
Refrigerator	4.4	3.3	4.5	3.4	3.9	3.2	4.0	3.9	3.5	3.6	2.9	3.1	2.6
Washing machine	3.5	3.2	4.0	3.6	3.5	3.7	4.1	3.6	4.2	3.7	2.9	3.6	2.9
Black and white TV	1.4	1.3	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.2	1.4	1.2	1.4	1.3	1.0	0.8	0.8
Color TV	6.0	7.6	6.9	7.1	7.0	7.1	8.5	6.4	7.2	7.0	5.8	5.6	6.5
Vacuum cleaner	5.0	4.3	5.6	5.4	5.0	5.7	5.7	4.6	5.5	4.9	4.0	4.3	3.7
Range	2.5	2.0	2.7	2.4	2.5	2.3	3.0	2.2	2.3	2.3	2.1	2.2	2.1
Clothes dryer	3.3	2.2	3.0	3.1	3.0	2.8	3.6	2.7	3.4	3.3	2.6	2.9	2.6
Air conditioner	2.0	1.5	1.5	1.2	1.5	1.1	2.4	1.5	1.4	1.5	1.4	1.4	1.1
Carpet	7.7	6.0	9.2	8.7	7.1	8.3	9.3	7.3	7.1	6.8	6.0	6.1	6.2
Vacation Intended Within Six Months: Percent													
Vacation Intended	43.4		44.0		48.9		50.0		48.9		44.9		44.6
Destination													
Home state	9.1		9.1		11.9		11.0		10.2		9.1		9.9
Other states	31.0		31.8		33.4		34.7		34.1		32.4		30.7
Foreign country	4.6		4.5		5.2		5.7		6.2		4.8		4.7
Means of Travel													
Automobile	29.8		29.5		32.7		33.2		32.7		29.7		31.5
Airplane	13.3		14.0		15.4		16.4		16.5		14.8		13.0
Other	3.7		3.3		3.8		3.5		3.4		4.4		3.6

All 1981 data have been adjusted to reflect that year's revised seasonal factors.

New Series: Beginning May, 1981 the NFO sample includes all types of households, prior to that families only. To link results overlapping surveys were conducted for four months commencing with May. Data are available on request.

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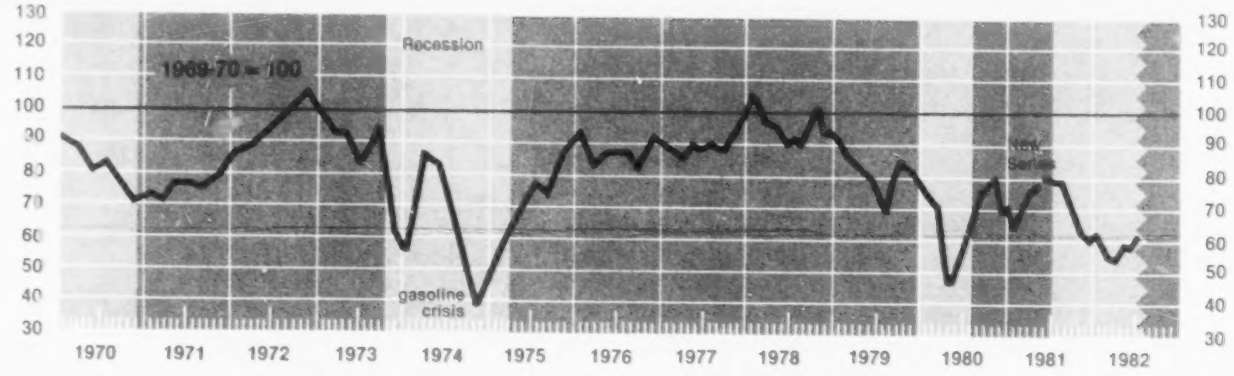
Based on a Survey Conducted by National Family Opinion, Inc.

Consumer Confidence Index

August, 1982



CONSUMERS' SPIRITS BETTER SPENDING PLANS STRONGER

The consumers' mood has improved. The Confidence Index, which rose in April and May but edged back in June, registered a good gain in July. The present Index (1969-1970 = 100) is 61.3, a rise of more than four points for the month. Most encouraging, almost all of the gain was accounted for by increased optimism about the future. Buying plans, too, which were off fractionally in June, were stronger in July.

But despite the consumers' more optimistic expectations, there continues to be considerable uneasiness with the ongoing situation. Over half of all respondents say that business conditions are "bad," close to three out of five report jobs are difficult to find.

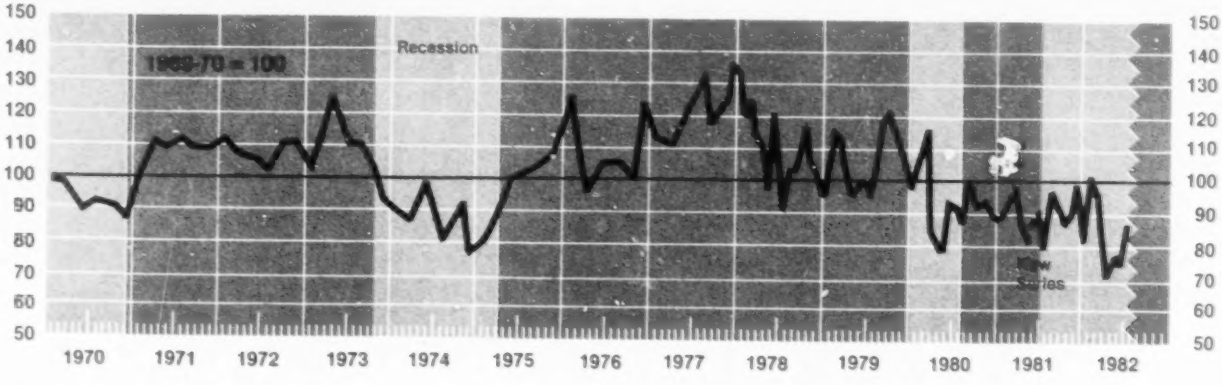
But in looking ahead to the next six months, more persons now, as compared to last time, expect more jobs to become available. This series has been rising slowly but steadily since March. On the broader question of business conditions, there was a sturdy rise in those who believe they will be better six months from now. Also, more persons than last time expect their personal incomes to rise.

Buying plans are up—and for all major items included in the survey. Intentions to purchase an automobile were indicated by 6.7% of those contacted, up from the prior 6.1 percent. Intentions to buy homes and major appliances also registered good gains.

Although recent economic reports range from indecisive to discouraging, the latest message from the consumer is distinctly positive. Confidence, which had perked up in the Spring edged off in June, reflecting an apparent faltering in business activity in that month. In July, however, the consumers' mood was markedly better, suggesting that the economy is in the recovery phase of the business cycle. The latest consumer survey results suggest that we could well experience fairly good economic growth in the third quarter of the year.

Fabian Linden

Buying Plans Index



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Composite Series: Index Numbers, 1969-1970 = 100													
Consumer Confidence Index	78.6	78.6	70.4	67.4	61.6	59.4	62.1	58.1	53.3	54.0	58.3	57.1	61.3
Present Situation	56.7	56.4	51.9	48.0	41.1	34.4	32.1	30.0	25.5	21.0	23.5	19.1	19.9
Expectations	93.3	93.4	82.8	80.3	75.2	76.1	82.0	76.9	71.8	76.0	81.6	82.4	88.8
Buying Plans Index	78.7	96.7	90.3	86.2	89.8	99.2	81.3	100.9	94.8	70.3	74.9	73.9	86.2
Appraisal of Present Situation: Percent													
Business Conditions													
Good	19.2	18.4	16.5	16.7	14.2	13.0	12.4	12.0	9.9	9.7	10.6	9.4	10.4
Bad	25.7	25.9	28.7	31.7	35.2	39.5	41.1	45.6	47.3	53.6	47.6	50.2	51.0
Normal	55.1	55.7	54.8	51.6	50.6	47.5	46.5	42.4	42.8	36.7	41.8	40.4	38.6
Employment													
Jobs plentiful	12.1	13.0	13.0	11.6	10.8	8.9	8.4	8.7	7.7	6.0	5.8	4.4	4.4
Jobs not so plentiful	51.0	49.1	48.0	48.1	45.7	44.3	43.4	40.5	40.1	36.9	41.3	39.7	38.0
Jobs hard to get	36.9	37.9	39.0	40.3	43.5	46.8	48.2	50.8	52.2	57.1	52.9	55.9	57.6
Expectations for Six Months Hence: Percent													
Business Conditions													
Better	22.9	22.2	19.3	19.6	19.3	21.5	23.6	21.9	20.6	22.1	23.4	22.4	25.3
Worse	12.1	12.4	15.8	18.5	20.2	23.9	19.9	22.9	22.6	19.3	18.0	18.3	16.7
Same	65.0	65.4	64.9	61.9	60.5	54.6	56.3	55.2	56.8	58.6	58.6	59.3	58.0
Employment													
More jobs	17.4	17.6	13.5	15.4	13.9	16.7	17.7	16.5	15.9	16.7	18.1	19.6	21.6
Fewer jobs	20.8	20.8	23.2	26.9	29.6	31.4	28.1	30.9	33.3	28.3	26.8	25.1	25.4
Same	61.8	61.6	33.3	57.7	56.5	51.9	54.2	52.6	50.8	55.0	55.1	55.3	53.0
Income													
Increase	30.9	30.8	30.4	33.4	29.8	31.4	31.3	29.9	25.8	22.1	24.5	23.0	25.9
Decrease	8.2	7.6	8.0	9.4	9.5	10.3	10.3	9.8	12.1	12.3	11.0	11.0	9.2
Same	60.9	61.6	61.6	57.2	60.7	58.3	58.4	60.3	62.1	65.6	64.5	66.0	64.9
Plans to Buy Within Six Months: Percent													
Automobile													
Yes	6.5	7.7	7.0	6.6	6.9	7.3	6.4	7.8	7.4	5.0	5.8	6.1	6.7
New	3.3	4.1	3.1	3.6	3.7	3.7	3.4	3.9	3.8	2.5	2.7	3.2	3.5
Used	2.8	3.2	3.4	2.7	2.6	2.9	2.9	3.5	3.1	2.2	2.7	2.6	2.6
Uncertain	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.3	0.6	0.7	0.1	0.4	0.5	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.6
Home													
Yes	1.8	2.5	2.4	2.3	2.4	2.7	2.0	3.2	3.0	2.1	2.0	1.8	2.4
New	0.5	0.6	0.3	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.6	0.3	0.5	0.3	0.4
Lived in	0.8	1.4	1.4	1.1	1.3	1.2	1.1	2.0	1.5	1.4	1.1	1.0	1.2
Uncertain	0.5	0.5	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.9	0.5	0.6	0.9	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.8
Major appliances													
Total plans	25.4	29.4	27.5	27.8	27.1	32.7	26.1	28.9	27.6	22.7	23.9	22.9	25.7
Refrigerator	3.3	4.5	3.4	3.9	3.2	4.0	3.9	3.5	3.6	2.9	3.1	2.8	3.0
Washing machine	3.2	4.0	3.6	3.5	3.7	4.1	3.6	4.2	3.7	2.9	3.6	2.9	3.4
Black and white TV	1.3	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.2	1.4	1.2	1.4	1.3	1.0	0.8	0.8	0.7
Color TV	7.6	6.9	7.1	7.0	7.1	8.5	6.4	7.2	7.0	5.8	5.6	6.4	6.9
Vacuum cleaner	4.3	5.6	5.4	5.0	5.7	5.7	4.6	5.5	4.9	4.0	4.3	4.0	5.8
Range	2.0	2.7	2.4	2.5	2.3	3.0	2.2	2.3	2.3	2.1	2.2	2.1	1.8
Clothes dryer	2.2	3.0	3.1	3.0	2.8	3.6	2.7	3.4	3.3	2.6	2.9	2.6	2.8
Air conditioner	1.5	1.5	1.2	1.5	1.1	2.4	1.5	1.4	1.5	1.4	1.4	1.3	1.3
Carpet	6.0	9.2	8.7	7.1	8.3	9.3	7.3	7.1	6.8	6.0	6.1	6.3	7.8
Vacation Intended Within Six Months: Percent													
Vacation Intended		44.0		46.9		50.0		48.9		44.9		44.8	
Destination													
Home state		9.1		11.9		11.0		10.2		9.1		10.1	
Other states		31.8		33.4		34.7		34.1		32.4		30.7	
Foreign country		4.5		5.2		5.7		6.2		4.8		4.6	
Means of Travel													
Automobile		29.5		32.7		33.2		32.7		29.7		31.7	
Airplane		14.0		15.4		16.4		16.5		14.8		12.8	
Other		3.3		3.8		3.5		3.4		4.4		3.3	

All 1981 data have been adjusted to reflect that year's revised seasonal factors.

New Series: Beginning May, 1981 the NFO sample includes all types of households, prior to that families only. To link results overlapping surveys were conducted for four months commencing with May. Data are available on request. (p)—preliminary (r)—revised

Please Note: In the interest of speeding the data contained in this publication to you, these series are now available on-line through The Conference Board Data Base. For more information, contact Linette Stein at (212) 759-0900.

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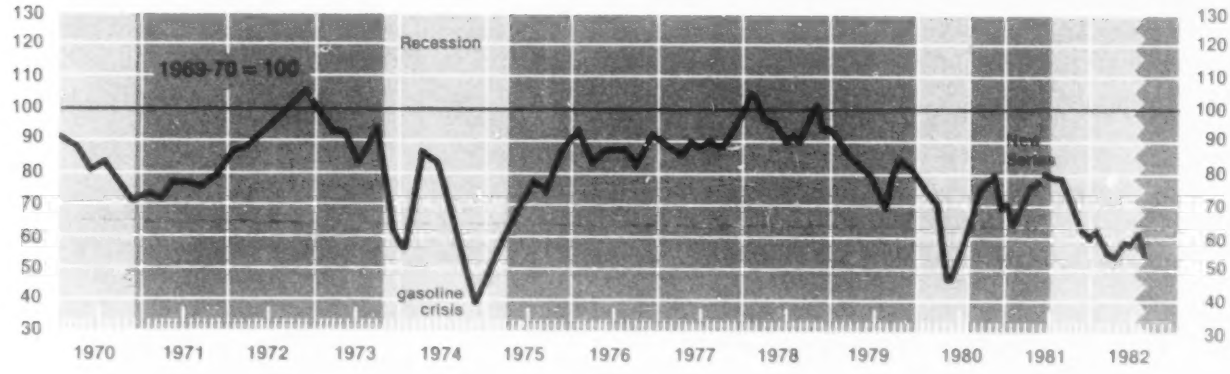
Consumer Attitudes and Buying Plans

A Monthly Report from The Conference Board
Based on a Survey Conducted by National Family Opinion, Inc.

Consumer Confidence Index

September, 1982



CONSUMER CONFIDENCE DOWN, BUYING PLANS ALSO WEAKER

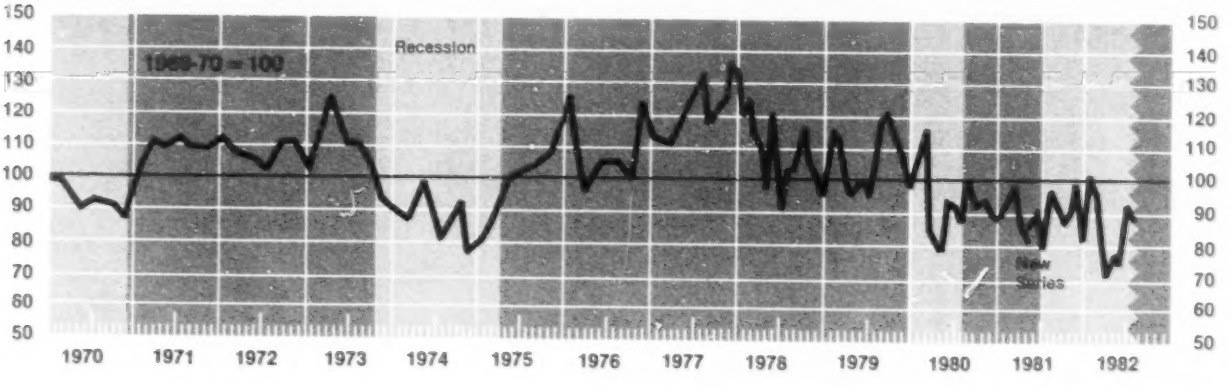
Consumer confidence declined in August, after having registered a fairly good gain in July. The latest index figure (1969-1970 = 100) is 53.7, a fairly substantial loss of some 8 points for the month. Consumers continue to be increasingly uncomfortable with the present situation and have now also grown more apprehensive about the future. Their plans to buy have also edged down.

More than half of all respondents believe that present business conditions are "bad," and even a larger proportion complain that jobs are hard to get. There is currently more discontent with ongoing conditions than ever before in the history of the survey. In looking ahead to the next six months, consumers have abruptly become more pessimistic. This is of some concern since their expectations have proven to be a rather good leading indicator of subsequent economic events. Expectations had, in fact, been increasing since the Spring, but the mood in August represents a sudden reversal. As compared to the preceding month, more persons now expect business conditions to worsen—21% as compared to a prior 17 percent. There is also more concern about employment: Over 29% of respondents expect jobs to grow scarcer, compared with less than 25% previously.

The decline in the consumers' optimism is difficult to explain. While the economic news has been less than encouraging, it has been no worse in recent weeks than in the preceding two months or so. However, the high—and still rising—level of unemployment may be an important reason for the consumers' deflated mood. Close to three out of every five persons now complain that jobs are hard to get, and only 17% expect that situation to improve over the next six months. The fact that the employment situation has been so dreary for so long appears now to be depressing the consumers' spirits.

Fabian Linden

Buying Plans Index



All data seasonally adjusted

Consumer Expectations and Intentions

Based on surveys conducted by National Family Opinion, Inc.
Percentage of all households

All series seasonally adjusted	1981 Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	1982 Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July(r)	Aug.(p)
Composite Series: Index Numbers, 1969-1970 = 100													
Consumer Confidence Index	78.6	70.4	67.4	61.6	59.4	62.1	58.1	53.3	54.0	58.3	57.1	61.6	53.7
Present Situation	56.4	51.9	48.0	41.1	34.4	32.1	30.0	25.5	21.0	23.5	19.1	20.9	18.1
Expectations	93.4	82.8	80.3	75.2	76.1	82.0	76.9	71.8	76.0	81.6	82.4	88.7	77.4
Buying Plans Index	96.7	90.3	86.2	89.8	99.2	81.3	100.9	94.8	70.3	74.9	73.9	92.0	87.9
Appraisal of Present Situation: Percent													
Business Conditions													
Good	18.4	16.5	16.7	14.2	13.0	12.4	12.0	9.9	9.7	10.6	9.4	10.7	8.8
Bad	25.9	28.7	31.7	35.2	39.5	41.1	45.6	47.3	53.6	47.6	50.2	49.7	50.7
Normal	55.7	54.8	51.6	50.6	47.5	46.5	42.4	42.8	36.7	41.8	40.4	39.6	40.5
Employment													
Jobs plentiful	13.0	13.0	11.6	10.8	8.9	8.4	8.7	7.7	6.0	5.8	4.4	4.6	4.4
Jobs not so plentiful	49.1	48.0	48.1	45.7	44.3	43.4	40.5	40.1	36.9	41.3	39.7	38.8	37.3
Jobs hard to get	37.9	39.0	40.3	43.5	46.8	48.2	50.8	52.2	57.1	52.9	55.9	56.6	58.3
Expectations for Six Months Hence: Percent													
Business Conditions													
Better	22.2	19.3	19.6	19.3	21.5	23.8	21.9	20.6	22.1	23.4	22.4	25.3	21.4
Worse	12.4	15.8	18.5	20.2	23.9	19.9	22.9	22.6	19.3	18.0	18.3	16.9	21.1
Same	65.4	64.9	61.9	60.5	54.6	56.3	55.2	56.8	58.6	58.6	59.3	57.8	57.5
Employment													
More jobs	17.6	13.5	15.4	13.9	16.7	17.7	16.5	15.9	16.7	18.1	19.6	21.0	17.2
Fewer jobs	20.8	23.2	26.9	29.6	31.4	28.1	30.9	33.3	28.3	26.8	25.1	24.6	29.3
Same	61.6	63.3	57.7	56.5	51.9	54.2	52.6	50.8	55.0	55.1	55.3	54.4	53.5
Income													
Increase	30.8	30.4	33.4	29.8	31.4	31.3	29.9	25.8	22.1	24.5	23.0	27.3	26.7
Decrease	7.6	8.0	9.4	9.5	10.3	10.3	9.8	12.1	12.3	11.0	11.0	9.8	10.7
Same	61.6	61.6	57.2	60.7	58.3	58.4	60.3	62.1	65.6	64.5	66.0	62.9	62.6
Plans to Buy Within Six Months: Percent													
Automobile													
Yes	7.7	7.0	6.6	6.9	7.3	6.4	7.8	7.4	5.0	5.8	6.1	7.2	6.6
New	4.1	3.1	3.6	3.7	3.7	3.4	3.9	3.8	2.5	2.7	3.2	3.6	3.7
Used	3.2	3.4	2.7	2.6	2.9	2.9	3.5	3.1	2.2	2.7	2.6	3.0	2.5
Uncertain	0.4	0.5	0.3	0.6	0.7	0.1	0.4	0.5	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.6	0.4
Home													
Yes	2.5	2.4	2.3	2.4	2.7	2.0	3.2	3.0	2.1	2.0	1.8	2.6	2.1
New	0.6	0.3	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.6	0.3	0.5	0.3	0.5	0.3
Lived in	1.4	1.4	1.1	1.3	1.2	1.1	2.0	1.5	1.4	1.1	1.0	1.2	1.2
Uncertain	0.5	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.9	0.5	0.6	0.9	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.9	0.6
Major appliances													
Total plans	29.4	27.5	27.8	27.1	32.7	26.1	28.9	27.6	22.7	23.9	22.9	27.3	29.9
Refrigerator	4.5	3.4	3.9	3.2	4.0	3.9	3.5	3.6	2.9	3.1	2.8	3.2	3.8
Washing machine	4.0	3.6	3.5	3.7	4.1	3.6	4.2	3.7	2.9	3.6	2.9	3.8	3.7
Black and white TV	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.2	1.4	1.2	1.4	1.3	1.0	0.8	0.8	0.8	1.0
Color TV	6.9	7.1	7.0	7.1	8.5	6.4	7.2	7.0	5.8	5.6	6.4	7.3	7.7
Vacuum cleaner	5.6	5.4	5.0	5.7	5.7	4.6	5.5	4.9	4.0	4.3	4.0	5.8	6.2
Range	2.7	2.4	2.5	2.3	3.0	2.2	2.3	2.3	2.1	2.2	2.1	1.9	2.7
Clothes dryer	3.0	3.1	3.0	2.8	3.6	2.7	3.4	3.3	2.6	2.9	2.6	3.2	3.0
Air conditioner	1.5	1.2	1.5	1.1	2.4	1.5	1.4	1.5	1.4	1.4	1.3	1.3	1.8
Carpet	9.2	8.7	7.1	8.3	9.3	7.3	7.1	6.8	6.0	6.1	6.3	8.0	9.2
Vacation Intended Within Six Months: Percent													
Vacation Intended	44.0		48.9		50.0		48.9		44.9		44.8		52.6
Destination													
Home state	9.1		11.9		11.0		10.2		9.1		10.1		10.9
Other states	31.8		33.4		34.7		34.1		32.4		30.7		37.1
Foreign country	4.5		5.2		5.7		6.2		4.8		4.6		6.2
Means of Travel													
Automobile	29.5		32.7		33.2		32.7		29.7		31.7		35.1
Airplane	14.0		15.4		16.4		16.5		14.8		12.8		17.4
Other	3.3		3.8		3.5		3.4		4.4		3.3		4.2

All 1981 data have been adjusted to reflect that year's revised seasonal factors.

New Series: Beginning May, 1981 the NFO sample includes all types of households, prior to that families only. To link results overlapping surveys were conducted for four months commencing with May. Data are available on request. (p)—preliminary (r)—revised

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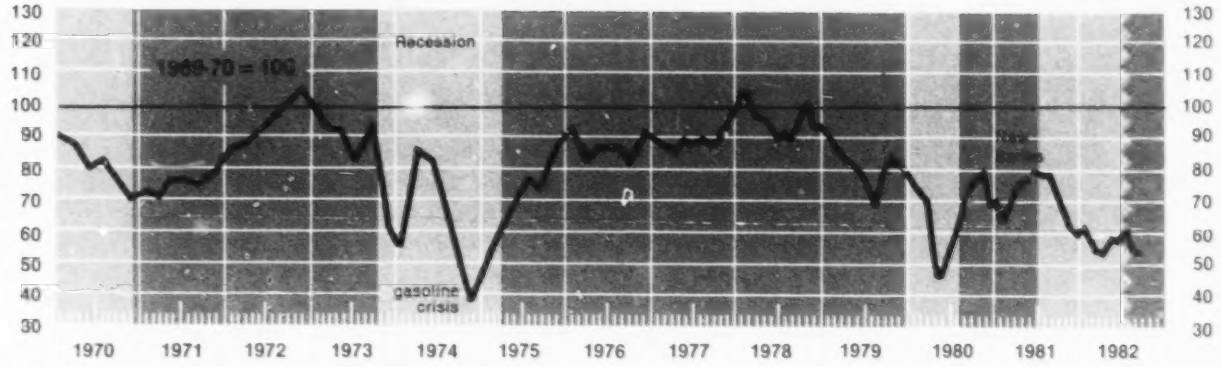
Based on a Survey Conducted by National Family Opinion, Inc.

Consumer Confidence Index

October, 1982



CONSUMER CONFIDENCE LOW BUT STEADY, PLANS TO PURCHASE DOWN

The measure of consumer confidence remained unchanged in September. The Board's Index (1969-1970 = 100) is presently at 53.5. Consumers view the present situation with increasing concern, but their outlook for the months ahead is slightly more optimistic. Buying plans are down for the second consecutive month.

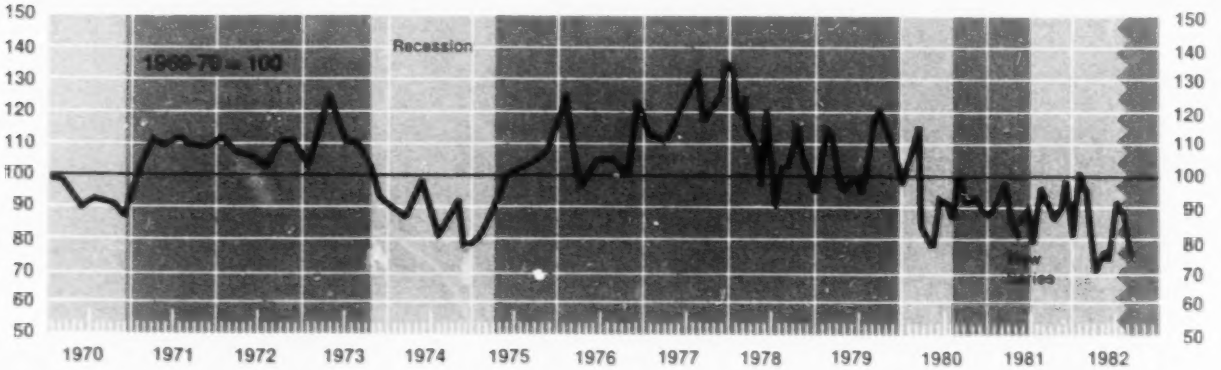
Substantially more than half of all respondents regard business conditions as "bad;" three out of every five complain that jobs are "hard to get." Both of these ratios are the most negative in the 15-year history of the survey. However, in looking ahead to the next six months, a higher proportion of persons than last time now believe that business conditions will improve; and a larger number expect that more jobs will be available. In assessing their own prospects, fewer persons than last time believe their earnings will increase.

Buying plans for all the items included in the survey are down. Fewer consumers than last time intend to purchase an automobile; fewer intend to buy a home. There has also been a decline in those in the market for a major appliance. Buying plans were also off in August.

The consumers' deflated spirits are consistent with the uninspiring economic news. While inflation has quieted down, the record-high level of unemployment and the discouraging job outlook apparently continue to be major depressants. More persons feel that there will be fewer jobs than more jobs in the immediate period. It is not likely that there will be a significant upturn in confidence until there are at least some signs that there is an improvement in the employment situation. It is often suggested that the economic recovery is waiting for the consumer, but with one out of every ten wage earners out of work, the consumer is waiting for the economy.

Fabian Linden

Buying Plans Index



All data seasonally adjusted

Consumer Expectations and Intentions

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Percentage of all households

All series seasonally adjusted	1981 Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	1982 Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug(r)	Sept.(p)
Composite Series: Index Numbers, 1969-1970 = 100													
Consumer Confidence Index	70.4	67.4	61.6	59.4	62.1	58.1	53.3	54.0	56.2	57.1	61.6	53.7	53.5
Present Situation	51.9	48.0	41.1	34.4	32.1	30.0	25.5	21.0	23.5	19.1	20.9	18.2	12.9
Expectations	82.8	80.3	75.2	76.1	82.0	76.9	71.8	76.0	81.6	82.4	88.7	77.3	80.6
Buying Plans Index	90.3	86.2	89.8	99.2	81.3	100.9	94.8	70.3	74.9	73.9	92.0	89.0	74.7
Appraisal of Present Situation: Percent													
Business Conditions													
Good	16.5	16.7	14.2	13.0	12.4	12.0	9.9	9.7	10.6	9.4	10.7	8.8	6.3
Bad	28.7	31.7	35.2	39.5	41.1	45.6	47.3	53.6	47.6	50.2	49.7	50.6	55.3
Normal	54.8	51.6	50.6	47.5	46.5	42.4	42.8	36.7	41.8	40.4	39.6	40.6	38.4
Employment													
Jobs plentiful	13.0	11.6	10.8	8.9	8.4	8.7	7.7	6.0	5.8	4.4	4.6	4.4	3.3
Jobs not so plentiful	48.0	48.1	45.7	44.3	43.4	40.5	40.1	36.9	41.3	39.7	38.8	37.7	36.0
Jobs hard to get	39.0	40.3	43.5	46.8	48.2	50.8	52.2	57.1	52.9	55.9	56.6	57.9	60.7
Expectations for Six Months Hence: Percent													
Business Conditions													
Better	19.3	19.6	19.3	21.5	23.8	21.9	20.6	22.1	23.4	22.4	25.3	21.5	25.8
Worse	15.8	18.5	20.2	23.9	19.9	22.9	22.6	19.3	18.0	18.3	16.9	21.3	19.7
Same	64.9	61.9	60.5	54.6	56.3	55.2	56.8	58.6	58.6	59.3	57.8	57.2	54.5
Employment													
More jobs	13.5	15.4	13.9	16.7	17.7	16.5	15.9	16.7	16.1	19.6	21.0	17.1	21.0
Fewer jobs	23.2	26.9	29.6	31.4	28.1	30.9	33.3	28.3	26.8	25.1	24.6	29.5	28.0
Same	63.3	57.7	56.5	51.9	54.2	52.6	50.8	55.0	55.1	55.3	54.4	53.4	51.0
Income													
Increase	30.4	33.4	29.8	31.4	31.3	29.9	25.8	22.1	24.5	23.0	27.3	26.9	21.9
Decrease	8.0	9.4	9.5	10.3	10.3	9.0	12.1	12.3	11.0	11.0	9.8	10.6	12.9
Same	61.6	57.2	60.7	58.3	58.4	60.3	62.1	65.6	64.5	66.0	62.9	62.5	65.2
Plans to Buy Within Six Months: Percent													
Automobile													
Yes	7.0	6.6	6.9	7.3	6.4	7.8	7.4	5.0	5.8	6.1	7.2	6.6	5.8
New	3.1	3.6	3.7	3.7	3.4	3.9	3.8	2.5	2.7	3.2	3.6	3.7	3.1
Used	3.4	2.7	2.6	2.9	2.9	3.5	3.1	2.2	2.7	2.6	3.0	2.6	2.2
Uncertain	0.5	0.3	0.6	0.7	0.1	0.4	0.5	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.6	0.3	0.5
Home													
Yes	2.4	2.3	2.4	2.7	2.0	3.2	3.0	2.1	2.0	1.8	2.6	2.2	1.8
New	0.3	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.4	0.6	0.6	0.3	0.5	0.3	0.5	0.3	0.3
Lived in	1.4	1.1	1.3	1.2	1.1	2.0	1.5	1.4	1.1	1.0	1.2	1.2	0.8
Uncertain	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.9	0.5	0.6	0.9	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.9	0.7	0.7
Major appliances													
Total plans	27.5	27.8	27.1	32.7	26.1	28.9	27.6	22.7	23.9	22.9	27.3	29.9	23.0
Refrigerator	3.4	3.9	3.2	4.0	3.9	3.5	3.6	2.9	3.1	2.8	3.2	3.8	3.1
Washing machine	3.6	3.5	3.7	4.1	3.6	4.2	3.7	2.9	3.6	2.9	3.8	3.6	3.1
Black and white TV	1.3	1.4	1.2	1.4	1.2	1.4	1.3	1.0	0.8	0.8	0.8	1.0	1.1
Color TV	7.1	7.0	7.1	8.5	6.4	7.2	7.0	5.8	5.6	6.4	7.3	7.8	6.0
Vacuum cleaner	5.4	5.0	5.7	5.7	4.6	5.5	4.9	4.0	4.3	4.0	5.8	6.2	4.1
Range	2.4	2.5	2.3	3.0	2.2	2.3	2.3	2.1	2.2	2.1	1.9	2.7	2.0
Clothes dryer	3.1	3.0	2.8	3.6	2.7	3.4	3.3	2.6	2.9	2.6	3.2	3.0	2.6
Air conditioner	1.2	1.5	1.1	2.4	1.5	1.4	1.5	1.4	1.4	1.3	1.3	1.8	1.0
Carpet	8.7	7.1	8.3	9.3	7.3	7.1	6.8	6.0	6.1	6.3	8.0	9.2	7.3
Vacation Intended Within Six Months: Percent													
Vacation Intended		48.9		50.0		48.9		44.9		44.8		52.2	
Destination													
Home state		11.9		11.0		10.2		9.1		10.1		10.7	
Other states		33.4		34.7		34.1		32.4		30.7		36.9	
Foreign country		5.2		5.7		6.2		4.8		4.6		6.2	
Means of Travel													
Automobile		32.7		33.2		32.7		29.7		31.7		34.6	
Airplane		15.4		16.4		16.5		14.8		12.8		17.5	
Other		3.8		3.5		3.4		4.4		3.3		4.2	

All 1981 data have been adjusted to reflect that year's revised seasonal factors.

New Series: Beginning May, 1981 the NFO sample includes all types of households, prior to that families only. To link results overlapping surveys were conducted for four mounts commencing with May. Data are available on request. (p)—preliminary (r)—revised

Please Note: In the interest of speeding the data contained in this publication to you, these series are now available on-line through The Conference Board Data Base. For more information, contact Linette Stein at (212) 759-0900.